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***Southeast Asia
Vietnam: TAP CHI CONG SAN
No 8, August 1989***

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All for Peace, Independence, and Development

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 8, Aug 89 pp 1-8

[Article by Nguyen Co Thach; not translated]

A Number of Proposals (From the Debate 'Conditions and Environment for Maintaining the Commercial Independence of the State Enterprises')¹

902E0113A Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN
in Vietnamese No 8, Aug 89 pp 9-16, 43

[Text] It has been almost 10 years since the party raised the signal banner launching the attack on the system of bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies. Since 1981, repeated attempts have been made to correct the "price-wage-currency" system in order to eliminate state subsidies. However, economic management at the macro level and the economic management apparatus of the state have not changed very much. The authorities at the various echelons continue to meddle in the commercial production operations of the economic units, but they have refused to take material responsibility for their decisions. The economic management organizations are still divided by sector and territory. That is, they must still go through many intermediary levels. In reality, this is a division of ownership rights regarding the means of production at each level. Because of this, an imposing bureaucratic centralism mechanism has been maintained in order to carry out all of the activities of the national economy.

Many factors have created obstacles for switching from the state subsidies mechanism to a commercial mechanism. But the main reason is the symbiotic relationship between the state management apparatus and the state-operated economic units. The interests of the state apparatus are tied closely to the distribution power of the state-operated economic units, and the survival of these units is dependent on budget funds controlled by the state apparatus. Thus, in order to switch the state-operated economic units to a commercial mechanism, major surgery must be performed in accord with the following steps:

1. The functions of the representative owner must be distinguished from those of the specific owners with respect to all-people's ownership.

The assets of the state-operated economic units, which include all the fixed and liquid assets, belong to all the people. How these assets are managed is a key problem in the economic system and state apparatus.

Naturally, the socialist state, which manifests the interests of all of society, must play the role of the representative owner for all-people's ownership. It has the right to manage and is responsible for managing the state-operated economic units in order to recover the initial investment capital, collecting taxes on the use of the country's assets and resources, controlling revenues in

order to ensure social fairness, providing the state economic units with information concerning the markets and scientific and technical advances, providing help in putting the progressive techniques and new technology into production, searching for markets, and formulating policies to stimulate commodity exports in accord with the needs of world markets at prices that will enable our goods to compete with those of other countries.

In short, with the credentials of a representative master for all-people's ownership, the state must carry out its function of controlling, inspecting, guiding, and regulating the commercial production activities of the state-operated economic units. But it must not interfere directly in these activities.

The labor collectives at the state-operated economic units, which the state has entrusted with managing and using the assets in their sphere in order to carry on commercial activities in accord with the contracts (contracts between the state and the state-operated economic units) are responsible for ensuring that these assets increase. They are responsible for paying the expenses and must fulfill their responsibilities to the state budget in accord with the law. Thus, the labor collectives at these economic units are the specific masters with respect to all-people's ownership assets in the spheres that they manage.

Separating the functions of the representative master from those of the specific masters must, therefore, be regarded as a prerequisite for making the state-operated economic units commercially independent.

2. The conditions of survival of the state-operated economic units (called state enterprises for short): Based on separating the two functions discussed above, the legal, economic, and organizational conditions necessary for the survival of the state enterprises must be established. Specifically:

2.1. Legal conditions: State enterprises are economic organizations with the credentials of a juristic entity (as recognized by the state in the "contracts" and as recorded in the commercial laws). They have the following conditions:

They are legally established organizations.

They have their own assets and independently responsible for these assets.

They have the right to make independent decisions about commercial production operations.

They can participate independently in civilian relationships (sign contracts and carry out their obligations). They can sue or be sued in court.

The contracts and commercial laws form the legal basis for the economic units to carry on commercial production and for the state to inspect, guide, and regulate their operations.

2.2. Financial conditions: State enterprises have their own assets and are independently responsible for these assets based on the contracts with the state.

The enterprises have the right to use these assets to hit the commercial targets (buy, sell, and trade), and they are responsible for increasing these assets. Those who commit acts that harm the assets of the state enterprises will be prosecuted based on the commitments recorded in the contracts.

Besides their own capital, the state enterprises have the right to borrow money from the banks without limit and to mobilize assets from the other economic elements using any acceptable form (shares, mutual funds, and so on).

The relationship between the state enterprises and the currency units (specialized banks) is one of equality between the borrower and the lender based on the principles stipulated by the state bank.

2.3. Commercial conditions:

The state enterprises have the right to purchase materials and equipment and sell their products on domestic and world markets (in accord with the stipulations of the state).

The state enterprises can sign labor contracts directly with the laborers. In hiring and firing laborers, the enterprises must act in accord with the Labor Law that the state will promulgate and in accord with the labor contracts signed by the enterprise and laborers.

The enterprise has the right to formulate its own commercial production plans in accord with the contracts or in accord with the needs of domestic or foreign markets.

The enterprises have the right to set the prices of the goods that they have produced. They can raise or lower prices based on market supply and demand.

2.4. Organizational conditions within the state enterprises:

a. State enterprise directors and management organizations:

The directors of the state enterprises are both representatives of the state whose task is to control the all-people assets and juridical persons who represent the interests of the labor collective in commercial production activities and in the civilian relationships of the state enterprises.

The state has put forth standards for selecting directors for the various types of enterprises and, based on that, held training classes for directors.

The organization directly above (each state enterprise has only one organization that is directly above it, that is, a ministry or local authorities in the area where the enterprise has its headquarters) will establish preliminary study boards to make decisions based on the

standards set by the state and select people who are qualified to participate as candidates for the position of director. In general, the candidates must have worked at the enterprise for at least 3 years. However, in cases in which the enterprise must be saved from going bankrupt, the higher-echelon organization can expand the field of candidates for the position of director.

The board of directors, in coordination with the enterprise's trade union federation, is responsible for organizing the election of a director at a state enterprise. This must be carried on publicly and democratically in accord with state regulations.

The list of candidates must be posted. The candidates are then responsible for explaining their action program and talking with voters directly.

The voting to select a director must be by secret ballot.

Based on the election results, the directly-higher organization must issue a directive appointing the director.

The director will organize an apparatus, select deputy directors in order to help him in a number of operational spheres, and select and employ cadres based on the commercial requirements during his term of office.

b. The board of directors of a state enterprise:

The state enterprise's labor collective will elect a board of directors. The board will, on behalf of the collective, serve as a technical, managerial, and business consultant to the director. At the same time, it must monitor the business activities of the director in accord with the commercial laws and the resolutions of the Congress of Workers and Civil Servants.

If the director and the board of directors disagree on an issue, the board of directors must notify the Congress of Workers and Civil Servants in order to obtain its views or notify the higher-echelon management organization to have it examine and resolve the issue.

The term of office of the board of directors will be set by enterprise statute.

c. Congress of Delegates or Congress of All the Workers and Civil Servants:

A Congress of Delegates or Congress of All the Workers and Civil Servants in a state enterprise will be held annually in order to listen to a report by the director on the results of the commercial production activities and to review his action program.

At the congress of workers and civil servants, everyone in the collective has the right to examine anything that is related to the commercial production operations of the enterprise or that affects their lives.

If it is felt that the director is incapable of carrying out the action program of the state enterprise, the board of directors and the congress of workers and civil servants

can submit a motion to the echelon directly above requesting that the director be removed.

d. Trade federations at the state enterprises:

The trade union federations at the state enterprises represent the interests of the laborers, and they are responsible for protecting the interests of the laborers. Trade unions are formed by the laborers on a voluntary basis.

Trade union activities must rely primarily on the financial contributions of the trade union members.

3. The environment of the commercially independent state enterprises:

The state enterprises organized based on the above model are economic entities with the credentials of legal entities. They are independent financially, and they can carry on commercial production activities independently based on the laws. They are responsible for paying their own debts and expanding. They must fulfill the contracts signed with the state and fulfill the other obligations recorded in the commercial laws. It can be said that these are living entities. Thus, if they are to survive and grow, a favorable environment must be created.

3.1. The legal environment: In the present state, if the state economic units are to become independent in commercial production, they must compete vigorously with the other economic elements. Because of this, the "rules of the game" must be very clear. Resolutions can no longer be used as the "rules of the game," because the resolutions are rarely very specific. Each person has a different interpretation and acts based on his understanding. This can easily lead to confusion. Moreover, business is risky. Thus, in carrying on actual operations, people want firm guarantees concerning legal aspects regarding the risks in business. That is, there must be a stable legal environment. For example, if the state economic units want to mobilize capital from the people, there must be laws concerning the ownership rights to the assets before the people will invest their capital. Thus, the laws concerning ownership rights to the assets will create an environment for mobilizing capital.

Efforts must be concentrated on formulating a number of basic laws. These do not have to be perfect. They can continue to be perfected during the implementation process.

3.2. The psychological environment:

Actually, the guiding targets in a planned commodity economy include many elements. These are not production processes but the economic actions of people. Thus, attention must be focused on stimulating things and creating motive forces within the economy. (This is something that we did not do in the bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies management mechanism, and we even did things that discouraged this.) In order to encourage each person to take the initiative and be

creative and in order to create motive forces and solidify their will power, confidence, and energy in carrying on economic activities, the interests of the people must be coordinated with the targets of the economic units of which they are a part and with the more widespread social problems, such as "eliminating poverty and backwardness." In order to bring the country into the modern age, a strong social psychological environment must be created in order to promote the wholesome behavior of people in commercial production activities with the aim of satisfying their needs and the needs of their unit in ways that will benefit all of society. For example, public opinion must be used to create a psychological environment that will encourage people to enrich themselves and regard trading activities as a glorious occupation that is the equal of any other profession. Intellectuals must be encouraged to build a reputation for themselves in commodity production.

3.3. The information environment: In order to shift quickly to a commercial mechanism, one of the pressing requirements is to shift immediately to an environment in which economic information can be spread. A network for gathering, handling, and providing information on markets and on scientific and technical advances must be organized and equipped on a nationwide scale. Broadcasts of market information to the economic units and to households must be strengthened in order to guide production, circulation, and consumption. The timely and effective transmission of market information on a nationwide scale will contribute to overcoming the difficulties and the long-standing sluggishness and problems in the economy. This will also help commodity production to expand more rapidly.

3.4. The commercial environment: The markets form a living environment, the commercial environment of the state economic units. Thus, we must quickly establish a unified national market on a nationwide scale that is not blocked by local boundaries. This must be tied closely to international markets, because today, economic development in a country cannot be separated from the international market. Favorable conditions must be created to enable the state economic units to import foreign capital and technology easily and operate actively in a multi-faceted commodity economy. At the markets, there must be free competition aimed at encouraging the state enterprises to improve technology and management in order to improve quality and economic results constantly and make it possible to compete on world markets.

In order to encourage the state economic units to switch to commercial activities, the market structure must be synchronized. On one hand, the consumer goods market must be expanded, the rate of construction on the means-of-production exchange markets must be stepped up, and the expansion of the multi-faceted currency circulation markets must be accelerated in order to force the state-operated banks to switch to currency transactions and coordinate things with the finance sector in regulating the national economy at the macro level. On

the other hand, labor markets must be approved and actively built in order to manage the laborers and talented men in an efficient manner and to step up the transfer of technology and exchange of information. Only in the commercial environment discussed above will it be possible to raise the technical and managerial standards of the state enterprises quickly.

4. Reorganizing the state's economic management apparatus in order to strengthen macro control:

In the traditional socialist economic model, state enterprises do not have any power. Power belongs to higher echelon power organizations. After the administration was separated from the state enterprises and the state enterprises were given the right to manage the commercial production activities themselves, the state enterprises had real power. Now, the directors represent not only the interests of the state but also the interests of the directors and the enterprises.

Because of this, the state management apparatus constructed in accord with the new model must be reorganized in such a way that it can both provide guidance and encourage the state enterprises to operate in accord with the plans of the state and control the behavior of the state enterprises using a system of rewards and punishments through the levers of taxes, prices, and credits.

5. Thoroughly renovate cadre organization:

An effort must be made to retrain the ranks of economic management cadres at both the macro and micro levels in accord with the commercial mechanism and study and promulgate regulations on recruiting talented managers and businessmen.

In order to create the conditions and a favorable environment as discussed above so that the state enterprises can shift to the commercial mechanism, there must be a fundamental change—a real revolution in renovating the economic management mechanism in our country. This will take time. However, in the state economic sector today, there exist a number of problems of varying degrees of seriousness (such as stagnation of materials and commodities, a lack of business capital, stagnation in production, unemployment, and many hardships in the lives of the laborers). The party and state must implement clear and unified policies in order to solve these problems and prevent them from generating unfortunate results.

Within the general body of basic solutions, there must be urgent solutions based on creating the conditions and environment of the business mechanism in order to clear a channel for production and circulation, which are now in dire straits. We can then perform the major surgery discussed above.

1. Classify the state enterprises: In every sector and every locality in the country, the state enterprises must be classified based on economic results and the importance

of the commodity products produced by the enterprise. Generally, the state enterprises can be put into one of three categories:

Category I state enterprises: These are state enterprises that are in the process of doing away with the bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies management mechanism, that have managed to exploit the enterprise's relative advantages (technical equipment, modern technology, and strategic material reserves), that are able to make flexible use of the commodity-currency relationship and the supply-demand relationship at both domestic and foreign markets through the present import-export mechanism, that are financially independent, and that can settle their debts, accept lead-in [dau vao] prices, and handle lead-out [dau ra] prices. These are enterprises that have made a real profit in commercial production and that have fulfilled their obligations to the state budget, accumulated capital to expand production, and invested intensively in order to increase productivity and improve product quality. These enterprises can compete on both domestic and foreign markets and maintain a stable life for their cadres, workers, and civil servants.

Category II state enterprises: These are enterprises that have for a long time exploited the two-price mechanism and the policy of low interest rates in order to profit from the price differential created by inflation. Thus, in name, they have fulfilled the state's plans and contributed profits to the budget. But in reality, they have eaten into their capital. Instead of accumulating capital, they have reduced their capital. In the face of the challenges during the past period, they have not been able to bear the lead-in prices because of the high lead-out prices, which the social markets can't accept, and because of mistakes that they did not make (very old machinery and equipment, shortages of materials and energy because of outdated technology, poor-quality commodities, the effects left by the state subsidies mechanism in the staffs at the state enterprises, and so on). If the state helps them in getting rid of the stagnant commodities and materials, settling their debts, and applying the price support policy within a specific period of time, many of these state enterprises will probably be able to settle their debts and expand.

Category-II enterprises must also be classified by the importance of the commodities that they produce in order to implement suitable measures for them. These enterprises can be divided into three subcategories:

Category IIA state enterprises include those category-II enterprises that produce goods that are vitally important to the country (the national defense enterprises, power plants, pharmaceutical enterprises, printing enterprises, and so on).

Category IIB state enterprises include those category-II enterprises that produce essential goods such as coal, cement, and cloth and that process agricultural products.

Category IIC state enterprises include those category-II enterprises that produce unimportant goods and that will never be able to recover no matter how much help the state provides.

Category III enterprises: These are state enterprises whose equipment and technology is very outdated and who cannot sell their products because of the lack of demand and because the quality of the products is so poor that the social markets will not accept them. These enterprises have been suffering losses for a long time. In general, there is no reason for them to remain in existence.

2. Inventory the assets and determine the sources of capital of the state enterprises: After classifying the state enterprises, the assets of state enterprises nationwide must be inventoried in order to evaluate the assets of all the state enterprises. The directors at the category IIA and IIB enterprises must be publicly examined in order to determine which ones are weak. The state and the directors of the state enterprises must sign contracts, and responsibilities in repaying funds to the state must be clearly stipulated. As for category IIC and III state enterprises, studies should be done on changing the types of goods produced, changing the ownership form (corporate enterprise, contract enterprise, and rented enterprise), incorporating them as part of category II enterprises, or disbanding them.

3. Establish a fund to help the category IIA and IIB state enterprises during the production reorganization process:

Based on implementing measures 1 and 2, based on the results of pricing items, holding bids, renting out items, and settling accounts in order to recover the assets at the category IIC and III state enterprises, and based on the sources of aid and import surplus of fraternal countries through loans, an aid fund must be established for those state enterprises that are reorganizing production. This must be done in order to solve three pressing problems:

Provide price supports to category IIA and IIB enterprises in getting rid of the stagnant commodities and materials so that they will have capital for reproduction.

Settle the debts between the production and business units and the banks, give advances in kind in order to supplement liquid assets to a number of category I state enterprises and to category IIA and IIB enterprises.

Provide some aid to the category IIA and IIB enterprises during the labor reorganization process in order to help them switch to the commercial mechanism (examine each specific case carefully).

Along with solutions 1 and 2, the third solution is aimed at ending the slow-down in production and circulation and quickly switching the state enterprises to the commercial mechanism.

4. Implement the accounting and statistics laws: After returning the state enterprises to normal production and circulation, an accounting and statistical system must be

implemented so that the state can monitor the commercial production activities of the state enterprises, and, based on that, implement a new tax system for the state enterprises.

5. Implement a new tax system for the state enterprises: Based on making an inventory of the assets and evaluating all the assets of the state enterprises and the sources of supplemental capital based on the third solution and based on the initial notes made in accord with accounting and statistical laws, taxes must be set on capital, the use of raw materials, land, and income. Those are the types of taxes that the state can collect in order to regulate the economic activities of the state enterprises, encourage intensive investment, and ensure social fairness. Import-export tariffs must be adjusted immediately in order to protect domestic goods.

6. Keep the specialized banks separate from the state bank: The specialized banks must be turned into currency business units. The state bank must carry out its functions as the center for formulating policy and carrying on state management in the currency business sphere (formulating policies and monitoring their implementation).

The multi-faceted currency market must be expanded in order to stimulate capital circulation and put an end to authoritarianism at the currency units in the state sector.

7. Reorganize the state's economic management apparatus: Once the labor collectives at the state enterprises are regarded as the specific owners of all-people's property, once the right to use the assets has been transferred to the state enterprises, and once commercial production operations are guided only indirectly by the economic tools and policies of the state, with the exception of functional ministries such as the Ministry of Economics and Planning, the Ministry of Finance, and the State Bank, the production ministries and local authorities will no longer play a direct role in economic management. There will be no reason for the existence of a "central economy" or a "local economy." Thus, at the central echelon, besides the functional ministries, all that will be needed are a number of special-sector ministries such as the Ministry of Industry, the Ministry of Agriculture (including agriculture, forestry, fishing, and water conservancy), the Ministry of Communications, and the Ministry of Commerce and Foreign Economic Affairs. These ministries will have the task of studying markets, studying development strategies and policies, providing information and training, setting standards for selecting management and business cadres, and, on behalf of the state, recognizing the legal credentials of the enterprise directors. The local authorities will concentrate on collecting taxes, protecting the environment, building an educational and cultural infrastructure, constructing roads and houses, and providing services to aid commerce.

This is the guideline for reorganizing the state's economic management apparatus and ending direct interference in the commercial production activities of the state enterprises. This is an important step in completing the major operation discussed above.

8. Urgently train management and business cadres for the new economic model: A school to retrain management and business cadres in accord with the commodity economy model must be opened. The examination and election system must be implemented widely based on the production and business plans. This is an important preparatory step in order to enable the economic body to expand in a wholesome manner after the operation.

9. Organize a market information system: After reorganizing the state economic management apparatus, an economic information system must be designed. The Ministry of Economics and Planning must serve as the center of integrated economic information in order to study economic and social development strategies for the entire country and for the ministries of industry, agriculture, communications, and commerce and foreign economic affairs, which are the special-sector information centers that are responsible for gathering and processing both domestic and foreign information and quickly transmitting this information to the economic units in the sector.

10. Urgently promote compiling and disclosing the economic laws and constantly perfect these laws during implementation: The legal environment is the most important environment in the business mechanism. Thus, the economic laws, above all the business, labor, tax, and banking laws, must be compiled as quickly as possible. These will gradually be perfected during implementation. There are certain laws that the president of the Council of State needs to announce publicly, such as the law on property ownership rights and the law on freedom to circulate commodities that have been produced legally in the country, in order to solidify people's confidence in commercial production activities and create the conditions necessary for mobilizing capital from among all classes of citizens.

Footnote

1. Organized by TAP CHI CONG SAN; see the complete text in TAP CHI CONG SAN, No 7 1989.

The Party Member Problem and the Political Vanguard Role of the Party in Social Renovation

902E0113B Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN
in Vietnamese No 8, Aug 89 pp 17-20

[Article by Hoang Chi Bao, associate professor of philosophy]

[Text] Leninist theory on the new-style party of the working class considers the party member problem to be one of the most important problems in the theory of party building. Lenin's guidance on the class viewpoint, the organization and discipline of party members, and their level of awareness, moral qualities, work capabilities, and ability to organize, educate, and persuade the masses was always topical in nature and had great practical meaning for party building. In this sphere, I think that there are presently several problems that must be understood clearly in order to form a basis for satisfying the requirements concerning the quality of party members and the political vanguard nature of the party.

First, Vietnamese society still has many of the typical characteristics of a traditional agricultural society. In the history of its development, Vietnam has never passed through capitalism. Although there have been a few factors and a number of signs of capitalist development (especially in the south during the period of American neo-colonialist aggression) in the economy, those were capitalist factors brought in from abroad. We have not had large-scale production based on large machine industries, and we have not passed through the process of socializing labor models and dividing the labor or through a bourgeois revolution in order to establish a bourgeois democracy in connection with the legal concepts and needs of the people. That is a general characteristic concerning Vietnam's low level of economic development and the immaturity of Vietnam's present social relationships. This special characteristic has put the mark of historical limitations on social life and our party. As a result, for the party and its members, the nature of the working class, the proletarian viewpoint, and the character of the working class are always matters that must be strengthened and perfected. With this social-historical basis, the party has constantly stressed improving the political, ideological, and organizational quality of the party and the quality of the party members in accord with the requirements of a revolutionary proletarian party. Closely related to this problem is the matter of improving the party and teaching Marxism-Leninism with the credentials of a scientific world view and ideological system of communists. The struggle to overcome the effects of petty bourgeois tendencies, the remnants of feudal thinking, utopian and idealistic viewpoints, and voluntarism concerning socialism, and the causes of empiricism, pragmatism, and dogmatism in political and ideological life and in the organization of the party is a long-term, difficult, and very complex struggle. Thus, renovating the party in order to renovate society is actually a revolution concerning thinking, organization, and man.

Second, the party and generations of party members were trained and tested and they matured in the historical process of the revolutionary struggle to seize and maintain power, with the specific targets being to defeat the feudal imperialists and win independence and freedom. Said another way, the school that tempered the party and most of the cadres and party members and gave them their political qualities and abilities was the school of war and of national democratic revolution, particularly the revolution for national liberation. In that situation, the party and its ranks accumulated many special and valuable experiences, including a profound revolutionary spirit, the capacity to withstand hardships and make sacrifices, a tradition of solidarity, a close relationship with the masses, the ability to get the masses to follow the party in carrying out the revolution, and the ability to educate and persuade the masses using the countless examples of cadres and party members who showed great loyalty and devotion and made sacrifices. In the national democratic revolution, the party had great prestige and influence among the masses. During that historical stage, standards and values concerning the character of party members were formed and proven by experiences. Those values included patriotism, revolutionary zeal, heroism in combat, and modesty and simplicity. They also set an ethical example for the masses.

Today, the requirements and tasks of the revolution have undergone a fundamental change, but the party and its members have not been able to keep pace. There have been basic shortages, because timely preparations have not been made. A conflict has arisen between needs and real capabilities. The experiences and skills of yesterday are no longer adequate to solve all the new and complex tasks of today. The standards of the party members used to be satisfactory and in accord with the historical stage, but they are no longer entirely suited to the present revolutionary state. On the other hand, now that the party has become the leader of society, the party's cadres and members, according to natural logic, now occupy social positions of importance and power. This fact has opened up the possibility of the appearance of negative social phenomena. Control by rudimentary and simple concepts concerning socialism, the influence of the bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies mechanism, and distorted views concerning the role of the party in society have led to the appearance of a large number of deviant cadres and party members. They have penetrated more and more deeply into organization and human relationships and created obstacles for solidifying the relationship between the party and the masses. The conclusion to be drawn here is that because the quality of the party members has declined, because party organizations are sluggish, and because leadership and organizational relationships have become weaker and more bureaucratic in nature, the prestige of the party has declined and the party's political vanguard nature has been damaged.

Third, the shortcomings and weaknesses in party activities during the past period show that in the socialist

revolution, the party has fallen short in a number of important areas: theory, scientific and managerial knowledge, leadership methods, and party member skills and quality. Because of this, building the party in general and the quality of party members in particular is an urgent requirement. It can be said that to democratize all of social life, the first thing is to implement democracy in the political life of the party. To renovate society, the party must renovate itself. To increase the party's prestige and combat strength, the party must improve the social prestige of party members.

Because of all the problems mentioned above, the party must carry out an urgent task: improve the quality of the party members and strengthen the political vanguard role of the party in renovating society.

In order to improve the quality of the party members and strengthen the combat role of the party in the renovation conditions, the first thing is to solve two closely related problems, which are actually two aspects of one problem:

Outstanding laborers who are enthusiastic about renovation, who will lead the way in renovation, and who have the capabilities to lead renovation to victory must be recruited into the party. This includes workers, peasants, working intellectuals, soldiers, cadres, and employees in every sphere of society. These will be primarily younger people who were born and who grew up during the construction of the new society. The political, spiritual, and combat vitality of the party during the final years of this century and in the next century will be characterized by the ranks of young party members. That is the generation of Vietnamese communists who have been formed by the renovation movement and who will be responsible for renovating society. Naturally, these young party members will be trained in the image of today's working class.

Along with bringing more and more vigorous people into the party, the degraded and deviate elements who are destroying the party's prestige, who are weakening the vitality of the party, and who are tarnishing the party's image in the eyes of the masses must be expelled without any hesitation or regrets. This must be done openly and democratically. The strength of the party in the party's internal struggle must be coordinated with positive public opinion in society, and the party building strength and concepts of the masses must be launched. The party must give the masses an opportunity to express their thoughts and viewpoints and their political positiveness in helping the party "remove the tumors." In this, party discipline must be very strong. There cannot be any unprincipled concessions. The masses will use the party's faithfulness and bravery in solving the organizational and human problems to measure the prestige of the party.

In the new revolutionary stage, which is directed toward renovating society, the party must give special attention to the work formula: "attach more importance to quality

than to quantity." The party must overcome a situation that is uncommon for a political party: the party has many members but is weak. The party must not advocate closing the door, but it must require those wishing to join the party to have sufficient standards. They must volunteer and be resolved to struggle and contribute to making the party strong, like a dynamic living organism.

Party member standards must be reconsidered in a more scientific manner. Those wishing to join the party must be enthusiastic, knowledgeable, intelligent, creative, and independent and critical in their thinking. Their level of awareness and revolutionary action must be measured by what they do, the social effects of their actions, and their ability to persuade and arouse the masses, not by what they say or by idle promises, which are often false and opportunistic.

The party must give special attention to expanding the party among the workers and intellectuals (especially the young intellectuals who have received basic training and who have been tested in work practices). At the same time, the party must also give special attention to expanding the party among the armed forces. The economic, cultural, and social spheres must be properly reinforced with new party members from various social elements. The party can be varied, but it must retain its working class character, its proletarian party nature. This can be manifested not only by increasing the percentage of workers in the party but also by improving the scientific standards, political and creative capabilities, and quality of today's workers, their organizational nature and discipline.

Each person's motives for entering the party must be examined frequently. Forms and methods of educating people concerning ideals must be applied in a profound and practical manner in accord with the standards of each target. Inspections must be made before people enter the party and throughout the party life of the party members. The purpose of this is to keep opportunistic, deceptive, and mercenary people out of the party. There is no place in the party for those who view the party as a place to profit personally and who would, therefore, set a bad example for the masses. A person's motive for joining the party is a complex social problem that is related to the social management mechanism and society's evaluation of the individual. Thus, solving this problem is not a simple matter of inspections and education. The best way to eliminate evil motives and twisted personalities in men is to eliminate special privileges and special rights, eliminate the bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies mechanism, give real attention to talents, qualities, and work results, implement social and economic policies based on the principle of social justice, and give attention to laws, discipline, criticism, and openness.

Another important problem is that to improve the quality of party members in order to elevate the political vanguard role of the party, much attention must be given to inculcating a scientific world view, providing people

with a scientific understanding concerning socialism and the party, cultivating revolutionary feelings, and training party members in actual activities. The essence of this problem is to provide training in theoretical thinking, involve party members (particularly the young and new party members) in labor activities, and struggle for democracy, discipline, order, and organization. Party members must set a bright example in the school of democratization and legislation. That means staying

close to the people, struggling on behalf of the happiness of the people, and putting up with control by the people.

Problems of Rural Area Development

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[Article by Dao The Tuan; not translated]

Should We Continue To Maintain Assault Youth in Economic Development?

902E0113C Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN
in Vietnamese No 8, Aug 89 pp 27-32

[Article by Tran Mieu and Pham Dinh Dang]

[Text] Recently, particularly since the First Plenum of the National Economic Construction Assault Youth held in January 1989, many people have been confused and some have even posed the question of whether we should continue to maintain the assault youth. The reason is that during the past 13 years, assault youths have not achieved very much. They have achieved very little in comparison with what has been invested in them. Moreover, the variety of the movements, particularly with the organization of a formation based on the new mechanism, has given rise to a whole series of complex and difficult problems, such as a name, targets of recruitment, who is to be in control, the organizational mechanism, the nature of the operating regulations, procedures and policies with respect to the assault youth, and the nature of its fighters. Furthermore, in the renovation process, stimulating the expansion of economic elements outside the state sector and expanding labor cooperation with other countries has opened up new paths in solving the youth problem.

The above ideas are very persuasive when you look at the facts: a figure of 100,000 assault youth members among millions of youths who do not have jobs, billions of dong spent on building forces, hundreds of hectares of land reclaimed and then left fallow, and hundreds of hectares of forests and other resources that have been adversely affected, in part by assault youths.

Thus, during the past 13 years, what have the assault youths done, how have they done things, and in what way have they grown?

Answers Based on Reality

For more than 12 years, through various ups and downs and periods when it seemed as if they would have to be disbanded, the Ho Chi Minh City assault youth forces have set a bright example, taken the lead, and like a flame, blazed up to become an assault youth movement nationwide. Today, there are assault youth units in 30 provinces and cities in the northern, central, and southern regions of the country with more than 100,000 members. A welcome sign is that almost all of the remaining provinces and cities in the country are actively preparing to establish assault youth forces. The dynamism and resolve of the party committee echelons, authorities, and provincial and municipal youth unions in building, leading, and guiding the assault youths has contributed to solving the problems in accord with our country's economic and social situation.

Reality has proven that this is a movement that is developing in the right direction and in accord with the policies of the party and state aimed at quickly and effectively exploiting the labor and arable land potential

and economic strengths of each region and locality and at making positive contributions to fulfilling the labor and population distribution plan for each region and the entire country. Furthermore, the assault youths are a model for organizing and assembling youths. They are a socioeconomic organization of youths that is contributing to implementing the party's strategic policies and to mobilizing capabilities in connection with the country's key economic targets and the state's plans. A special characteristic that needs to be mentioned is that the assault youths are contributing not only to implementing things in the usual sense like a simple factor but also to implementing things as a result of their nature, that is, they continue to launch assaults to carry on renovation, disclose things, create new things, exploit the capabilities and intelligence of youths, contribute to the renovation of the country, and score economic and social achievements. This is also a school for training the young generation, particularly the ranks of young managerial cadres, in accord with the new management mechanism that is being formed.

The assault youth units are striving to shift gradually to economic accounting and trying to tie production to business, move from the small to the large, use the short-term to support the long-term, tie the activities of the centralized formations to providing jobs on the spot, and tie carrying out the political and seasonal tasks to building stable enterprises, state farms and forests, and production and service teams using joint enterprise and partnership forms. At the same time, much attention is being given to applying the scientific and technical advances to production, gradually shifting from simple cooperation to a division of labor, and coordinating manual labor with mechanized labor. Many units have switched from engaging in itinerant, unstable, and hired labor to implementing contracts, having plans and investments, having technical guidance, having strict shipping and receiving regulations, and assigning quotas to groups and laborers.

As a result of these steps and measures, the assault youth units have confirmed their position in at least 30 provinces and cities, created large-scale commodity production zones, been at the forefront of the national economy, and created new economic-population points. The value of the commodity products produced by the Ho Chi Minh City assault youth is much greater than that of a number of economic sectors in the locality. At a time when many sectors have suffered continuous losses, the assault youth have continued to deliver profits to the city. In just over 10 years, the municipal assault youth have excavated 7 million cubic meters of overburden, reclaimed 40,000 hectares of fields, built almost 2 million square meters of housing, contributed to settling 41,000 people, and built 46 new economic villages. Assault youths have left the city to go mine coal and carry on afforestation. They have virtually solved the capital's fuel problem, provided fuel for processing building materials, and cultivated hundreds of hectares of previously empty fields and bare hills. The Minh Hai, Thuan Hai, Phu Khanh, and Ha Nam Ninh assault

youth forces have led the way in raising shrimp for export and have begun to achieve very encouraging results. The Nghe Tinh, Lam Dong, Dac La, and Ha Tuyen assault youth forces have planted firm roots in tea, coffee, sugarcane, and citronella areas covering thousands of hectares. A number of state-operated units in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, and Dong Thap that had been suffering losses for many years were turned over to assault youth forces by the people's councils. These units have now been solidified, and they are fulfilling the plans and operating at a profit. Besides constructing a number of elements of the Hoa Binh water conservancy project, the Hoa Binh City assault youth unit has concentrated on making full use of the sources of forest products and producing consumer goods. At the same time, it has afforested hundreds of hectares of headwater forest, raised livestock and planted crops, improved living conditions for the 450 members of the unit, and accumulated capital in order to invest in varying the products and occupations. In 1986, the unit's gross value of production was 10 million dong. It is now 130 million dong, of which more than 8 million has been delivered to the budget. During the first 6 months of 1988, with the 600 laborers in the service and the capital construction, transportation, ship dismantling, and fresh-water production enterprises, the value of the commodities produced by Corps [binh doan] 2005 (Hai Phong assault youth) was 200 million dong.

In 1988, assault youth forces nationwide produced more than 200 types of commodity products with a gross value of production of more than 20 billion dong. The value of the export products was more than 5 million rubles-dollars. The material and spiritual lives of the members of the units have gradually improved. Many new economic villages have been built and solidified in the mountain areas of the Central Highlands and in Nam Bo. The assault youth forces have made notable contributions to building the economy and national defense, especially in border and coastal areas and on the islands.

On the other hand, the expansion of the assault youth formations during the past period has manifested the efforts of the youth union aimed at satisfying the pressing and legitimate needs of the youths, who want to have work, make contributions to society, and enjoy the fruits of their labor. During the past 13 years, about 200,000 youths have participated in assault youth formations. That is a small figure as compared with the number of youths who do not have jobs, but it is still very significant with respect to the activities of the union in the present situation. Today, the youth union can no longer stand aside at a time when the pressing needs of youths have not been satisfied. Moreover, the union will not be strong if there are primary-level union organizations but the youths don't have jobs. Because of this, the union's concept concerning its educational function cannot be too narrow. That is, it must go beyond simply providing moral, intellectual, physical, and artistic guidance and training. It must coordinate things with the sectors and state organizations and directly organize

labor and creative youths so that the youths can learn on their own. Of course, that does not mean that the function of the assault youth forces is to build the economy like other economic sectors. Rather, the assault youth forces can participate directly in solving the country's economic and social problems by organizing youth economic construction models based on the policies and positions of the party and state and, through that, bringing together, educating, and training the youths. Of the more than 200,000 youths who have participated in assault youth formations during the past 13 years, more than 10 percent are youths who were once backward youths with a police record. They have been educated and reformed and turned into honest youths. More than 70,000 youths have been recruited into the union, and almost 2,000 union members have been recruited into the party. More than 25,000 youths have studied culture through middle-level general school. More than 5,000 assault youth members have become assault youth managerial cadres at various echelons, that is, from production team leaders to enterprise directors. Some people have become managerial cadres in the localities, and more than 4,000 youths have become union cadres at various echelons.

Building the assault youth forces has provided us with many good lessons in solving the economic and social problems and mobilizing youths. The party committee echelons and local authorities must implement a more unified policy on organizing the assault youth in their localities. Organizing the assault youth forces must be tied to implementing the policies on economic and social development in order to overcome the weaknesses and difficulties in the localities. In order to implement the policies and positions of the local party committee echelons and people's committees, there must be close coordination between the functional organizations, such as planning, labor, financial, and banking organizations, and the youth union. These policies must continue to be perfected in a synchronized manner. The stipulations on the organizational and managerial mechanisms must be manifested in the laws on assault youths in the localities. An effort must be made to avoid "just getting by" and waiting until problems and obstacles arise before making an effort to do something, which will lead to passivity, confusion, and poor results.

Organizing and controlling the assault youth forces in building the economy is a new and difficult problem. The youth union must take the initiative, dare to think and act and take responsibility, boldly become involved in economic accounting and socialist business, and implement the right of production independence. Careful preparations must be made concerning cadres and commercial accounting conditions. Things must be done in a rational manner, and an effort must be made to avoid doing things in a hasty manner or being concerned only about scale. There must be close coordination between the production of consumer goods for domestic consumption and the production of export goods and between production and processing. Attention must be

given to using the scientific and technical advances in production, organizing movements to exploit the technical innovations and improvements, and to actively studying the good experiences and avoiding making unnecessary mistakes. The human factor must be exploited in managing things and carrying out the tasks, and this must be manifested in the economic and social development plans of each unit and in the economic, technical, and social arguments of each project. Every measure aimed at raising labor productivity must start from the need to expand production and improve the material and spiritual lives of the laborers.

Along with the successes, the assault youth forces have had to pay a high price, that is, they have experienced difficulties and defeats and been wasteful.

In one period, the assault youth units in Phu Khanh, Tay Ninh, Dong Thap, and the Vung Tau-Con Dao Special Zone experienced great difficulties and had to be disbanded. In 1978, the Council of Ministers issued Directive 460 on organizing assault youth units in the southern provinces. But in reality, this directive had a state subsidies nature and so it wasn't long before more assault youth units disintegrated. Since 1980, the economic and social situation has grown even worse. During this stage, providing jobs for youths has become an urgent problem for society. This is a particularly pressing problem for the youth union. In the southern provinces, a very difficult question is: Will it be possible to maintain the assault youth forces. If so, how? In the northern provinces, the question is how to provide jobs for millions of youths. The question is, what model and formation should be used? Even though the Politburo and the CPV Central Committee have given much attention to youth work, providing jobs for youths has continued to encounter difficulties. In particular, assault youth units have continued to disintegrate.

The root of this situation is that the assault youth came into being at a time when the old mechanism was still foremost, the scope was broad, the tasks were varied and unstable, and there was a lack of planning and technical guidance and a lack of concrete procedures and policies on obligations and rights in connection with final production results. Added to that, things were done in an impetuous manner. Inspection and control activities were not carried out thoroughly, and the conditions necessary for production and other activities were lacking. The communications routes were difficult, and the prevention and treatment of diseases was not done well. Because of this, the difficulties became even worse and more serious. The activities of the assault youth were formal in nature. The assault youth units vacillated and did not take a firm stand. Because of this, investment in production could not achieve results. Moreover, operating expenditures relied totally on the state subsidies mechanism and so the situation of the assault youth forces, which was already very difficult, grew even more difficult.

An important characteristic is that a number of localities and many ministries and sectors at the central echelon

do not yet see the special nature, richness, and complexity of the assault youth. As a result, there is a lack of leadership, guidance, and concern.

But even with the above weaknesses and shortcomings, this does not mean that it is the assault youth forces that are responsible for the fact that their historical role has come to an end. Rather, this is the result of a lack of leadership and guidance and poor organization, or to be more exact, a lack of correct and adequate leadership and guidance.

The decisive thing is to continue to correct things in order to advance.

The assault youth forces form both an economic unit and a school and training ground for youths. Many economic elements and various other elements participate in the assault youth. The leaders in the assault youth are mainly youths who have never had jobs or a specific occupation, and the leading and managerial cadres are inexperienced. Because of this, organizing and managing the assault youth forces in the localities has encountered many difficulties and obstacles. These must be examined carefully in order to have effective guidelines and measures to overcome these things.

The first thing is organization. In accord with Decision 216 of the Council of Ministers and in reality, it is the youth union that directly controls and guides the assault youth organizationally. As for economic management, the assault youth rely on the state echelons in the localities. This mechanism is in accord with the special nature of the assault youth and hits the targets of building the economy and bringing together and educating youths. But in a number of localities such as Ho Chi Minh City and Dong Thap Province, the assault youth forces are directly controlled and guided by the people's committees. The youth union just coordinates things and recruits, selects, and organizes the education of the youths in the assault youth units. This mechanism is in accord with the expansion process of the assault youth forces and the realities in the localities. Now that the activities of the assault youth forces are expanding, the organization and managerial standards must be higher, and the assault youth are no longer all the same age and exhibit different characteristics. Perhaps this is a good model that we can use to study things and prepare the preconditions for expanding the assault youth forces nationwide in the coming period. This does not conflict with Decision 216: "The assault youth units engaged in economic work are to be organized and managed based on socialist economic accounting. Each primary level production unit is free to engage in the most beneficial form of commercial production based on the guidelines set by the state plans. These units are responsible for the losses and profits in their activities. They must provide jobs and maintain the living standards of the laborers in their unit in accord with the policies of the party and the laws of the state." What this means is that two aspects must be ensured: the economy and education.

Second is guidance relationships. This is an important corollary of the above problem. Should the assault youth be organized from the top down? We don't think so. Instead, they should be organized at each echelon. The needs concerning capital, materials, and equipment and the other needs can be fulfilled by the planning organizations based on balancing the economic and social development plans in the localities in accord with the state's planning mechanism. The echelons above the assault youth are the people's committees and the youth union. The relationship between the provincial and district level assault youth units is a relationship of equality and joint enterprise on economic matters. The one is not higher than the other. At each level, the assault youth units can organize in a systematic manner. For example, the provincial level assault youth are the general unit. Below them are the directly-subordinate enterprises, work sites, and state farms and forests. The relationship between the general unit and these units is a relationship of superior-subordinate, with the general unit providing all-round guidance.

Third is the policy system. Before formulating policies, a question that must be answered is, to which economic element are the assault youth units subordinate? Reality has shown that as far as form is concerned, they are subordinate to the state economic elements. It is the people's councils that issue decisions on the establishment of assault youth units, and it is the people's councils that supply their seals. However, the elements and economic activities of the assault youth units are quite varied and complex. The state invests in and equips some of the units and puts them into balance with respect to the economic and social development plans in the localities. But other units are just given the credentials of juristic entities. They must handle all the other problems by themselves. Thus, depending on the specific economic and social situation in each locality, we think that with respect to policies and positions, the state's policies should be applied to the different economic elements in order to solve the problems. Specifically:

a. If the initial investment capital is supplied primarily (more than 50 percent) by the local state authorities, the

assault youth units must turn over profits and pay taxes just like state-operated economic units. Conversely, if the initial capital comes from the union or if it is borrowed or comes from contributions, the assault youth units must pay taxes to the state just like economic units outside the state-operated sphere.

b. Because the assault youth units must engage in economic activities and, even more importantly, solve the social problems of youths, when formulating policies to distribute the profits, the units must be strengthened and encouraged by reducing the percentage contributed to the state budget.

c. The assault youth units must set aside expenditure funds for the youth union in order to supplement the operating expenditures of the union.

The assault youth units must be allowed to manage the welfare funds directly and make bank deposits based on the credit system currently in effect or based on commercial production. Reality has shown that unless this problem is solved, the assault youth forces will not be able to overcome the present difficulties.

Another question is, how should the assault youth participate in implementing the policy of expanding foreign economic affairs? It must be realized that in this sphere, the capabilities of the assault youth units have not been properly exploited, and there is still no rational mechanism. We think that above all, the assault youth units in the localities that are subordinate to an economic element must utilize the state's stipulations on exports and imports and international cooperation in accord with that economic element. On the other hand, in order to stimulate the assault youth units based on their special characteristics, the state can grant tax exempt status to the assault youth for a specific period of time.

Only if there is correct and all-round understanding will people be resolved to solve the present problems. On one hand, we must oppose subjectivism and impatience. On the other hand, we must not be passive or waiver. We must continue to build the assault youth forces in a firmer and more effective way.

**Experiences in Exploiting the Dong Thap Moi
Agricultural Ecosystem***902E0113D Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN
in Vietnamese No 8, Aug 89 pp 33-37*

[Article by Le Van The, vice minister of agriculture and food industry]

[Text] Dong Thap Moi is a vast area that has been left uncultivated for many years. Much of the soil here is acid and sulfate soil. During the rainy season there is heavy flooding, and during the dry season there is a lack of fresh water. In the past, this was considered to be the most difficult area in the Mekong Delta in which to expand agriculture. This natural area covers a total of 629,170 hectares (equal to 69.5 percent of the area of Long An, Dong Thap, and Tien Giang provinces). It consists of 12 districts, one city, and 13 villages. In 1987, it had a population of 1,296,000 people for an average of 206 people per square km.

In 1980, the state began making basic surveys, built a number of canals (in particular, the Hong Ngu canal brought in fresh water to wash away the sulfate), and began to apply a number of lessons and scientific and technical advances to production. This led to notable steps forward in agricultural production, particularly rice. In 1987 paddy yields reached 1,069,000 tons, and the average yield was 33.5 quintals per hectare per year. The yields of a number of other crops, such as sugarcane and jute, were good. Gradually, specialized cultivation areas were developed. Although animal husbandry has not expanded very much, this sector has still reached notable levels: 64,000 bovines, 265,000 pigs, and more than 1.2 million ducks. As for forestry, there are about 104,000 hectares planted in cajuput trees, and eucalyptus trees have been planted on more than 10,000 hectares. In the marine products sector, the main occupation is fishing, but people are now beginning to give attention to raising shrimp. However, the economic potential of the Dong Thap Muoi area has not yet been fully tapped. There are 153,000 hectares of uncultivated land. The 90,000 hectares of tenth-month rice yield only 15 tons per hectares. (This land can be used to plant two crops per year with a yield of 80-90 tons per hectare per year.) The population density is low, and the commodity ratio is high. Additional laborers and other people can be brought in from other places. Many sectors such as forestry, buffalo rearing, fish rearing, peat extraction, brick and tile making, pottery making, and so on have not been promoted.

In order to exploit the area's potential, the Council of Ministers has formed a committee to guide the exploitation of Dong Thap Muoi. On 18 March 1988 it issued Directive 74/CT, which put forth guidelines and tasks for developing the economy and society of the area. The directive stated: "The production of food is the key task. At the same time, afforestation and forest protection must be promoted. The material and technical base must gradually be built in order to maintain the expansion of

agriculture, forestry, and fishing. A redistribution of the laborers and other people must be carried on in order to fulfill the requirement of expanding production. Along with developing the economy, special attention must be given to gradually improving the cultural and spiritual lives of the people in the area."

The plan for exploiting the area was implemented in 1988, and a number of initial results were achieved. The paddy yield was 1,414,000 tons, an increase of 345,910 tons, or 32.4 percent, as compared with the previous year. The area under cultivation increased 50,630 hectares, or 15.9 percent. The per capita paddy yield for the entire area increased from 824 kg in 1987 to 1,070 kg in 1988. Almost 400,000 tons of grain were mobilized in 1988, which was equal to 28.3 percent of the gross production of grain (and this does not include the paddy that the peasants and localities sold directly to the Grain Corporation and people in Ho Chi Minh City). Many remote districts and areas also achieved good results in producing and mobilizing grain. The material and technical base of the area has gradually been formed. This includes a water conservancy system, communications routes, an electricity system, mills, scientific research installations, and agricultural service and production installations. More than 18,000 households have come to exploit Dong Thap Moi (13,700 households from Long An, 3,750 from Dong Thap, and 725 from Tien Giang). The provinces have formed a number of new districts and villages. The peasants have been given additional land, and there is adequate fresh water to expand production. In 1988, Long An Province reclaimed 27,600 hectares and transformed 5,000 hectares of one-crop fields into two-crop fields. During the initial phase, 12,554 hectares of virgin land was given to 8,330 households, an average of 1.5 hectares per household. The lives of the people in the area have been improved, and attention has been given to public health and education. Long An Province has built nine more clinics and seven more schools, and the hospitals have been expanded and upgraded. Electricity has been brought to the remote districts, Vinh Hung, Moc Hoa, and Thap Muoi.

Based on the initial results scored in implementing the plan to exploit the Dong Thap Muoi ecosystem, we would like to make the following observations:

First, exploiting agriculture based on the ecosystem is an economically and socially effective way to develop agriculture.

Dong Thap Muoi is an ecological area with favorable natural conditions (land, water, and climate). It has 600,000 hectares of natural land, 242,000 hectares of farm land, and much economic and agricultural potential: one-crop land and uncultivated land. Also, the per capita farm land is higher than in other areas (1,920 square meters per person). Using Dong Thap Muoi as the unit to formulate plans to exploit agriculture based on programs with targets instead of on administrative

units (provinces) as in the past is an agricultural development guideline aimed at fully exploiting the existing conditions in accord with the special characteristics of agricultural production and capabilities in formulating and implementing plans. Here, we can concentrate capital and materials in order to exploit things effectively and quickly with a high commodity ratio and produce many products for society.

Exploiting agriculture based on the ecological area is related to many sectors and localities and to many problems, from conducting research to implementing things. Because of this, a committee to guide the exploitation of Dong Thap Muoi has been formed. The committee is composed of representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, the Ministry of Water Conservancy, and the Ministry of Communications and Transportation, representatives from Project 60 B, and authorities from Long An, Tien Giang, and Dong Thap provinces.

Reality has shown that to exploit the Mekong Delta effectively, it is essential to do things based on the specific ecological area, such as the Long Xuyen quadrangle, western Song Hau, and Cau Mau island. The most suitable scale for each area is 500-600,000 hectares. Each area must have a guidance committee directly subordinate to the central echelon. The participation of the various sectors and localities in the area is essential, too.

Second, a synchronized material and technical base must be built, beginning with water conservancy, communications, and energy.

Exploiting Dong Thap Muoi means exploiting many sectors (agriculture, forestry, fishing, industry, and so on) in an integrated manner, but the main sectors are agricultural and grain production. This requires synchronized investment by many sectors, with investments concentrated on water conservancy, communications, and electricity. Dong Thap Muoi has difficulties concerning land and water, but if canals to bring in fresh water and communications routes are built and electricity is installed, more people will come here and new villages will spring up. As a result, there will be additional crops of rice, production will expand, and material and cultural life will improve. The past years have shown that Dong Thap Muoi began to change only after the plan to dig the Hong Ngu canal was completed. In the past, Dong Thap Muoi had a number of large canals, such as the Duong Van Duong and Nguyen Van Tiep canals, and many smaller canals. But the volume of water transported by these canals was very small (about 7 cubic meters per second). This was because the canals were quite long (80-90 km) and the slope was very small. Because of this, little was achieved in washing away the sulfate. After conducting studies, the Ministry of Water Conservancy had the Hong Ngu canal connect the Tien River with the Vam Co Tay River at the shortest point near the headwater area, where the slope was very steep. This resulted in a stronger flow of water and increased

the volume of water to 27 cubic meters per second, which was sufficient to rid a large area of sulfate during the dry season. After the Hong Ngu-Vinh Hung canal, the Ministry of Water Conservancy continued to build many other canals in order to bring fresh water to remote areas. This included the Cai Bot canal, canal 28, canal 79, and the Tan Thanh canal. The provinces, districts, and villages built a system of side canals and field canals, with the volume of earth excavated in 1988 totaling 10.3 million cubic meters. As a result, the area irrigated during the winter-spring season has increased from 121,000 hectares in 1987 to almost 200,000 hectares in 1989, which is an increase of more than 40,000 hectares a year.

Another reason why Dong Thap Muoi is prospering is that it has an expanded road network. A typical example is Highway 49, which runs through the sulfate fields and connects Tan An City with Tan Thanh District. Roads and electricity have come to remote areas, commodity circulation is easy, cultural and spiritual life has been improved, and the people feel more at ease when going to remote areas.

The above shows that when organizing things to exploit agricultural zones, to score high economic and social results, attention must be given to various conditions such as water conservancy, communications, and energy.

Third, there must be coordination between basic research and production plans and between scientific research and production practices. Science and technology must be introduced to the producers gradually.

Dong Thap Muoi is an area that was left uncultivated for a long time. It has great potential, but there are also many difficulties in organizing things to exploit this potential. The area is flooded for almost six months. During the dry season, there is a shortage of water. Almost 80 percent of the land is sulfate soil, and the area is affected by the tides. During the dry season, saline water is prevalent. Thus, to exploit the area well, the area's basic situation must be understood. Based on the studies and surveys conducted by the State Science and Technology Commission and the Vietnam Institutes of Science, we have developed a more accurate map of the entire area. Based on this, we have organized inspections and surveys and drawn project maps for each subzone and district and gradually supplemented the plans for exploiting things each year and each season in a rational manner. Because of the good coordination between making basic inspections and zoning production areas, we have avoided losses in arranging the capital construction projects in multicropping areas. However, in 1988, because the additional rice crop area expanded quickly, some places expanded into areas where the water conservancy problem had not yet been solved. As a result, there were about 10,000 hectares where crop yields could not be maintained.

We have organized scientific experimental research stations in order to find the best solutions concerning

farming techniques. Activities have been coordinated with the research stations of the International Mekong River Commission, the Water Conservancy Institute, and the Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology in order to guide the implementation of the intensive rice cultivation project in a number of areas with the aim of familiarizing the people with the scientific and technical advances in using varieties and fertilizer based on the season. The point that should be noted here is that the scientific research activities and basic inspections have been carried on based on economic contracts between the local production units and the institutes, schools, and scientific organizations.

Fourth, labor must be organized rationally, and centralized labor units must be formed to serve as the standing assault forces in capital construction.

Now that we have begun to exploit the area, the amount of capital construction work (carrying on water conservancy and communications work, building storehouses, and establishing new villages) and the amount of production work (because of increasing the number of crops per year and opening up additional occupations) has increased greatly. This means that labor must be organized rationally.

In order to exploit Dong Thap Muoi, besides the existing state farms and forests, Long An has used three labor forces: on-the-spot socialist laborers, laborers from the southern districts, and, in particular, six economic construction units (a centralized form of labor organization that uses youths of military age to form construction regiments). These units are carrying out the key tasks in building the water conservancy and communications projects, reclaiming wasteland, and preparing sites to receive settlers. They have also received land directly in order to organize production (carry on afforestation, work fields, and raise livestock) based on economic accounting guidelines.

In 1988, Long An's economic construction units did most of the capital construction work in the area. They reclaimed more than 7,500 hectares of wasteland. Of this, 6,300 hectares was developed as rice fields with a gross project value of more than 1 billion dong. The fields were turned over to people from the south so that they could lead a settled life and build their new homeland.

Experience has shown that in order to quickly create a number of initial material and technical bases for areas that have just begun to be exploited, it is essential to form centralized labor units that use economic accounting to carry on capital construction.

Fifth, there must be correct policies, and the three interests, among which are the long-term interests of the producers, must be reconciled. This is the only way to manifest the great potential (capital, technology, and production experiences) of the localities and people in order to build the area.

Exploiting Dong Thap Muoi requires many materials and much capital. Initial estimates show that almost 19

billion dong will be needed to carry on capital construction in the area during the period 1988-1990. That is an average of 6.3 billion dong a year (based on 1986-1987 prices). Based on the increased needs and present prices, the provinces estimate that in 1989, almost 51 billion dong will be invested in the area, with the breakdown as follows: Long An, 16.5 billion; Dong Thap, 21 billion; and Tien Giang, 13 billion.

Because funds from the central budget are limited, Council of Ministers Directive 74/CT on exploiting Dong Thap Muoi states: "Besides state funds (budget funds and bank loans), the localities must mobilize other sources of capital (including both domestic and foreign sources) in order to build the area, such as holding lotteries, issuing Dong Thap Muoi construction bonds, mobilizing capital from private and collective sources, and so on in accord with the guidance of the Ministry of Finance."

In order to attract the human and material power of the sectors, localities, and economic elements in building the area, the central echelon and localities have issued specific regulations on policies to stimulate production, expand the occupations, and oppose state subsidies in regulating the population to build the new economy. This includes policies on transferring land and forests, policies on stimulating vocational development and hiring laborers, and so on.

The above policies have encouraged the people (including people in the cities) to invest money in agricultural production and other sectors in the area. Besides the system of state-operated services, the private network of agricultural production services is expanding (private individuals have spent money to purchase large tractors and pumps, build irrigation pipelines and mills, and so on). The people in a number of villages in Dong Thap Province have contributed more than 40 million dong to build a small water conservancy system. In Long An, in 1988 about 27,600 hectares of wasteland were reclaimed. To do this, the province spent only 2.2 billion dong to settle accounts for 6,300 hectares, which included expenditures to carry on capital construction projects to create sites to relocate laborers (village headquarters buildings, public health stations, and schools) and to clear the land of bombs and mines. The money for the remaining 21,300 hectares came from the district and village budgets, and the people contributed about 7.6 billion dong for general expenditures. (The people in the southern districts contributed 2.5 billion dong in order to reclaim 7,000 hectares.) It is estimated that of the 51 billion dong invested in capital construction in 1989, about 14-15 billion dong, or 29.4 percent came from the central budget through the sectors and localities. The rest came from local (provincial, district, and village) budgets and from the people.

Clearly, even though the state lacks money, if policies are implemented to reconcile the interests, large sums of money can be mobilized from among the people, and the motto "the state and people working together" can be implemented in order to invest in building the area and in building other important projects.

The initial results and experiences have opened up good prospects for implementing the plan to exploit Dong

Thap Muoi with the targets already set for the period from now until 1990, particularly concerning producing grain and adjusting the population.

However, during the implementation process, there are still many difficulties and limitations. For example, agricultural production is not yet comprehensive, and grain yields have just been increased. Industrial crops and animal husbandry have not been expanded, and the forest area has not fulfilled the plan. Small industries and industries that process agricultural products and produce building materials are growing slowly. The infrastructure that supports production (communications, electricity, and the repair of machines, tractors, and agricultural equipment) and that supports life (clinics, schools, water wells) is very small. This will require a great effort on the part of the sectors, localities, and people who are participating in exploiting the Dong Thap Muoi agricultural ecosystem.

It Is Both Necessary and Possible To Vigorously Develop Biotechnology in Our Country

902E0113E Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN
in Vietnamese No 8, Aug 89 pp 38-43

[Article by Nguyen Huu Thuoc, professor of biology]

[Text] Biotechnology encompasses many scientific and technical sectors in the spheres of biology and technology, above all microbiology, genetics, biochemistry, and chemical technology. By using the knowledge and methods of these scientific and technical sectors, we can obtain useful products from microbiology to cell cultures in technological processes. Biotechnology is being given priority in those countries that are members of the Council for Mutual Economic Aid [COMECON] and in many countries with a developed economy.

Today, many countries in the world are investing in the development of biotechnology. It is estimated that by 1990, the biotechnology markets in the world will have a value of approximately \$48 billion.

The vigorous development of biotechnology has given birth to a new industry full of promise: the biotech industry. The scope of operations of this industry is very broad and is present in many economic and technical sectors, such as crop growing, animal husbandry, marine products, forestry, the food industry, the chemical industry, energy, public health, and environmental protection.

In agriculture, biotechnology is used primarily to ensure that the crops receive sufficient nutrients using biological means and to increase the resistance of the crops to harmful insects and diseases, to increase their ability to survive in places where the land and weather conditions are unfavorable, to increase yields and product quality, and to reduce expenditures on energy in the production process.

The main directions of development of biotechnology in crop growing sector are:

To increase the ability to fix nitrogen through symbiosis between nitrogen fixing bacteria and the crops. Genetic

work is aimed at increasing the attraction between nitrogen-fixed bacteria and crops, switching "Nif" genes, and ensuring the copying of those genes to other types of bacteria or other types of crops that are being studied and used. Today, microorganisms that have the ability to fix nitrogen in the roots of rice plants are being cultured in laboratories. It is estimated that with this developmental trend, within the next 20 years, the need for industrial fertilizer can be reduced to two-thirds of the present level. Besides this, biotechnology can be used to select crop varieties that are resistant to acidic and saline conditions and drought. It will be possible to use various types of microorganisms to replace industrial fertilizers, produce and use various types of insecticides and microorganic herbicides, and so on.

Biotechnology is being used in animal husbandry with the aim of creating biomass sources with a high protein count in order to replace or supplement the other sources of protein and nitrogen of livestock feed. Other nutrients (biofactors) for animal feed—the trace elements that are necessary for the matter exchange process of animals—are being created. Today, most of these elements are produced through chemical synthesis. A few amino acids (above all lysine), vitamins (mainly B12), and a number of enzymes are produced on an industrial scale using biotechnology. Growth hormones and veterinary medicines are being created. The livestock herds are being increased rapidly using integrated culturing techniques. The waste matter in animal husbandry is being treated using enzymes in order to create sources of energy and clean up the environment.

In industry, the new achievements of modern biotechnology, such as cell culturing, genetic techniques, cell and industrial microorganism reproduction techniques, and enzyme techniques are being more and more widely spreadly used in the pharmaceutical, food processing, and chemical industries. In the past, many of the products in these spheres were produced through chemical synthesis or through grafting from natural sources. Now, they are produced using biotechnology, which has gradually replaced chemical synthesis processes.

In the public health-pharmaceutical sphere, many types of vaccines have been produced using genetic and cellular technology. These vaccines are used to treat influenza, bacterial hepatitis, and leukemia. At the same time, in the developing countries, biotechnology is moving in the direction of producing vaccines to treat malaria, cholera, hemorrhagic fever, and other diseases caused by parasites.

Insulin and interferon have been successfully produced using genetic technology. The Soviet company Biogen and the American company Genetech have produced a type of interferon known as Alpha interferon to treat cancer and other diseases. It is estimated that the production of these drugs earns \$3 billion a year. By 1995, worldwide production of interferon will be valued at \$4.5 billion.

In the future, the use of biotechnology in the public health-pharmaceutical sphere will move in the direction of producing biologically active materials that do not come from humans or livestock and producing materials that the human body can produce in only small amounts, such as interferon, insulin, and somatostatin.

A scientific direction of biotechnology with bright prospects is genetic technology. It is predicted that by the year 2000, genetic technology will earn approximately \$40 billion a year. This technology will be used to produce valuable types of protein with high biologic activity in treating diseases and increasing livestock and crop yields.

The COMECON countries are organizing many centers and laboratories to conduct biotechnology studies in agriculture, centers to train biotechnology cadres, and so on. Many countries have established biotechnology science and production federations. A number of countries have established large research institutes to carry on biotechnology studies. These include the Organic Biochemistry Institute in Moscow and the Center for Genetic Technology and Biotechnology in Havana. India has established a Department of Biotechnology subordinate to the Ministry of Science and Technology in order to manage the growth of biotechnology there.

Various international organizations of the United Nations such as FAO [UN Food and Agriculture Organization], UNIDO [United Nations Industrial Development Organization], and UNESCO have biotechnology development programs. UNIDO operates two large biotechnology centers in Torino, Italy, and New Dehli, India, particularly the one in New Dehli, in order to support the developing countries.

It is not just the governments of many countries that are interested in expanding the biotechnology organizations of the state. There are also many private capitalist corporations that have invested in developing biotechnology in order to reap huge profits.

It does not cost too much to invest in biotechnology. Thus, many developing countries, particularly Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, South Korea, and Taiwan, are actively engaged in biotechnology.

Our country has great potential with respect to developing this new scientific sector. The party and state have decided that biotechnology is one of the key scientific sectors and that priority must be given to developing this sector. Actually, we began conducting experiments at a number of colleges, research institutes, and production installations in 1954. To date, we have scored a number of initial achievements in studying and using microorganism, cellular, enzyme, and genetic technology. Our scientific and technical standards in the biotechnology sphere have been raised. A number of our laboratories have the standards to solve many problems posed by the national economy, and we have acquired many scientific and technical advances and made effective use of them in Vietnam's specific conditions. However, our country's

biotechnology sector is still weak and dispersed. It has not been given the proper amount of attention or funded adequately. It has not been regarded as a leading scientific sector. This has been manifested in the following ways:

Cadres: Our ranks of biotechnology cadres have been trained since the 1960s both here and in socialist countries. A few have trained in other countries. After leaving college, about 90 percent of the cadres have received training in socialist countries, primarily the Soviet Union. Most of the cadres have taken traditional biology courses. Very few have studied modern biotechnology subjects such as genetic technology or molecular biology. Most cadres have received a college education, but very few have a higher degree. There are not enough middle-level technical cadres, practical engineers, and skilled workers to build a modern biology industry. Most of the biotechnology cadres, like scientific and technical cadres in general, were trained in basic science. Few have received any training in technology or technical design. They have had more academic training than production experience.

It was not until just recently that we began offering a course in industrial chemistry at the Polytechnic College in Hanoi, which graduates five or six engineers a year. We have not given enough attention to sending people abroad to study such subjects. A few have been trained but not in accord with a predetermined policy. Most of the cadres work at research organizations, or they teach or hold management positions. Very few actually work at industrial production installations.

The material and technical base: Today, there are 18 laboratories, centers, college departments, and enterprises (two enterprises) in our country that are participating in implementing the topics of the program to score scientific and technical advances in biotechnology.

The material bases of these organizations are very uneven. Few of these bases were built solidly. Many of the installations and plants have gone "downhill" or have a very short life. They cannot provide the technical conditions necessary for installing equipment, particularly modern research equipment.

Much of the equipment is outdated or damaged, and there is a shortage of equipment for the production installations. During the past 5 years, based on a number of draft laws of international organizations and a number of capitalist countries, few laboratories have been equipped with relatively modern equipment. These include the laboratory of the Epidemiology Institute, the genetic research laboratory of Hanoi University, and the Agricultural Science and Technology Institute. A number of other installations have been provided with a few pieces of equipment. However, this equipment has not been provided in a synchronized way in the sphere of research on microorganism or cellular technology. And there is a shortage in the sphere of enzyme and molecular genetics (genetic technology).

Most of the chemicals used in biotechnology have to be imported. The amount of chemicals imported is very small. There is a lack of variety, particularly reagents and enzymes (only limited amounts are provided based on the aid laws). The electricity and water provided does not meet the minimum requirements.

Information and materials: This is another weak aspect with respect to biotechnology. Information and materials have not satisfied the information development requirements for science and technology in general or for biotechnology in particular. Few scientific journals, particularly journals published in capitalist countries, are imported, and when they are, they are usually outdated. Exchanging specialists and sending cadres to attend international scientific conferences and seminars is very limited. Recently, new hopes concerning our ability to use the international scientific and technical information system arose as a result of our participation in COMECON's program to integrate scientific and technical advances to the year 2000.

The state has invested very little as compared with the development requirements of biotechnology, and these investments lack synchronization. For a long time now, we have focused on investing extensively, with the emphasis being on basic research and laboratory research. Little attention has been given to developmental research, pilot research installations, or semi-production installations, the bridge between scientific research and production. Moreover, very little equipment has been provided to support biotechnology.

In short, we have the capabilities to develop this important scientific sector rapidly, but we are backward and slow. We have not exploited the integrated strengths of the biotechnology sector or gained the support of other sectors and echelons.

Vietnam is a developing country with a low point of departure. Thus, we must have methods of developing biotechnology that are suited to the natural, economic, and social conditions of our country. Because of this, we feel that the biotechnology development formula for our country should be:

Modern technology must be coordinated with classical and traditional methods. Emphasis must be given to developing medium-sized and small-scale technologies. In particular, in the industrial sphere, attention must be given to the existing experiences of our people.

During the initial period, attention must be focused on importing synchronized technology instead of trying to compete with the advanced industrial countries in the leading spheres such as gene splicing. We must study or use simpler technology and less expensive technology that is easy to transfer and easy to adapt.

Much attention must be given to training cadres, particularly in the sphere of molecular biology and genetic technology. Emphasis must be given to training young

and talented cadres so that they will be able to do research and provide support for a long time.

Maximum and effective use must be made of international cooperation with both the socialist and non-socialist blocs in order to develop biotechnology quickly.

With the above formula, in order to carry out the great tasks in this sphere, there must be a system of measures. Attention must be given to the following measures:

A biotechnology strategy and policy must be formulated for our country for the period from now until the end of the century and to the year 2010. Our country does not yet have a leading organization in biotechnology. Biotechnology research and development is still scattered. Thus, we must form a biotechnology federation. This will be an inter-sector scientific and technical cooperation team consisting of scientific research and production organizations. These organizations must have work guidelines, cadres, and the material conditions to provide good support for developing biotechnology laws. These organizations will be directly subordinate to the ministries and linked to each other by a coordinating mechanism. They will receive support from the State Science and Technology Commission.

In order to apply the advanced techniques in production as soon as possible, the formation of biotechnology enterprises must be encouraged. These production installations must follow the operating guidelines of small-scale industries in which the state, collectives, or private individuals have invested. This means that economic elements must be mobilized to participate in developing biotechnology.

Cadre training is the decisive element with respect to developing biotechnology in our country. The Ministry of Higher and Vocational Education must conduct pilot projects in teaching biotechnology at a number of colleges and eventually make this a regular part of the curriculum at the colleges concerned.

Excellent students at these levels and young science cadres must be selected to receive training both here and abroad in the specialized fields in biotechnology.

Postgraduate, advanced, and short-term classes on biotechnology must be organized in order to quickly have ranks of cadres, particularly technical cadres, which are now in great demand. There must be good cooperation with the COMECON countries in the priority spheres based on cooperation and specialization in producing biotechnology products. We must try to cooperate with and obtain help from the UN organizations concerned that have their own biotechnology program. At the same time, we must try to obtain help from capitalist countries, such as countries in Southeast Asia, that have a developed biology industry.

Developing biotechnology is a major and difficult task, but prospects are bright. The organizations of the party

and state must given attention to this and soon promulgate suitable policies, especially an investment policy. The science cadres, who are the main force and who have much potential, must be trained and exploited in order to ensure that biotechnology provides good support for the three economic programs of the party and to prepare for the coming biotechnology revolution.

Investment in Education

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 8, Aug 89 pp 44-48

[Article by Duc Minh; not translated]

Several Problems Concerning Front Cadres

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[Article by Hoang Thai, member of the Secretariat of the Vietnam Fatherland Front Central Committee]

[Text] For a long time now, the image that people have had of front cadres is that of elderly people who dress and behave properly, who are frequently invited to attend this or that meeting "to add to the solemnity," and who meet with various people to "build solidarity and unity." This image is still deeply embedded in the minds of many people, including a number of leading party and state cadres at various echelons. It should be pointed out that that image is a product of front organizational and operational viewpoints in an historical period that is now gone.

Today, the Vietnam National Unification Front, which is called the Fatherland Front, is certainly not an association of leading figures or other such people. Nor is it a mass organization of elderly retired people. The front is a broad political-social organization of the people within the political system. Together with the party and state, it is struggling for the prosperity of the fatherland, the happiness of the people, and solidarity and friendship among nations. The front is a true revolutionary action organization of the people. This requires the construction of a suitable system of cadres who can transform the guidelines and contents of renovating the front into reality.

However, if we continue to rely only on the ranks of full-time cadres as in past years, in renovation, the front will never be able to expand its activities or turn them into mass activities at all four levels (to the village and subward level). It will not be able to mobilize many targets in various social spheres. No matter how large a staff these ranks have, they will not be able to satisfy the requirements. Many of the front organizations have "struggled" well and have even been overstaffed. But unless they change the direction of their activities, the cadres will just run in circles or "be content to sit still." Conversely, there are a number of places that have

reduced the size of the staff but that have still managed to expand the part-time forces. As a result, there is much activity.

The activities of the front are actually the organized activities of the people. Most of the front cadres come from people's movements. For the most part, these forces consist of two types:

People who have a relationship with and good influence on the people (or each social target). Their reputations and actions attract many people. They understand and faithfully reflect the hopes and dreams of the people.

Excellent specialists and people who understand each sphere of social life (politics, economics, culture, education, the law, and so on) who now hold positions or who have retired. Depending on the specific needs and the situation at each place, the front can ask them to cooperate in an individual or collective capacity (based on the seminar agenda) so that they can play a role and manifest an effect in mobilizing each social target and advising the front about policies and legal matters. In order to make good use of these cadre forces, two points need to be given attention:

First, the organizational and managerial methods must be renovated based on the fact that full-time front cadres and cadres who are not full time must work together in the same organization (most of these will be collaborators). Only one or two full-time cadres are needed. The practice of doing things "separately" must be abolished. We must not follow the principle of centralism or issue orders. Everything must be discussed democratically. People must listen to each other and respect the contributions of those cadres who are not full time. They must not be required to work "8 hours."

Second, there must be policies to motivate and stimulate people (both spiritually and materially) in order to compensate them for the physical and "mental" labor that they have contributed. They must be provided with the minimum tools necessary to carry out the work. All echelons of the front must pay some of the expenses themselves based on front statutes. With certain exceptions, in general these semi-professional forces should not be turned into professional cadres of the front, because doing that would sever their natural relationship with the masses and cut them off from the environment in which they operate. They would lose their source of strength just like "Ang-te" was lifted off the ground.

Based on expanding the non-professional forces, the ranks of professional front cadres (on the staff) must gradually be reduced to the minimum necessary to carry out the tasks that the part-time cadres cannot do, that is, organizing forces, organizing movements, and reviewing the operating practices of the front.

The synchronized activities of the part-time and full-time cadres will determine the results of the front's work in the present situation.

In the face of renovation, there are many problems concerning the quality and capabilities of the front cadres, above all the key cadres at the various echelons. All conditions, such as cultural and scientific-technical standards and revolutionary accomplishments, are important, but it will be very difficult to manifest an effect if the people have lost confidence. If front cadres have the confidence of the people, it does not take much persuasion to solve many very complex problems. How can cadres gain the confidence of the people?

First of all, these people must be independent in thought based on their position. Always submitting to the leadership of the party is a matter of principle, but they cannot allow the thinking of the party committee echelons to replace their own thinking. The experiences of other countries must be studied, but people must be selective.

Front cadres are not people who like to be "perfectly round." Nor do they like to pick quarrels. They are people who dare to struggle and who know how to struggle. For renovation, people must uphold the truth, speak frankly and honestly, protect what is right and oppose what is wrong, struggle for what is right, make constructive suggestions, and not make idle criticisms or stand outside complaining.

As the organizer and leader and at the same time a member of the front, the party has the responsibility and the right to select and recommend key cadres for the front at each echelon. The other mass organizations that are members of the front share this right and responsibility. No one can arbitrarily impose some form. The key cadres of the front must be chosen through democratic discussions (between the representatives of the mass organizations and the representatives of the various classes of people) and, in the end, through elections. That is the way to ensure honesty. The confidence of the party committee echelons is not always in line with the confidence of the people. Because of this, when selecting and recommending cadres for the front, the party committee echelons must examine things from many angles. If the election results are different from what they had intended, they should regard that as normal. The president of the front can be a party committee member, an ordinary member of the party, or someone from outside the party. People must get rid of the idea that "if you aren't a party committee member, you can't be the president." If a party committee member is assigned the task of helping the party committee guide the work of the front, that is an internal matter. Assigning that person a position in the front is up to the front. There is no conflict between the two.

Young cadres replacing old cadres and new cadres replacing veteran cadres is a necessary event in the development of every organization. However, with respect to the front, the problem is not that simple. Some people say that whenever a person reaches a certain age, he should retire and let a younger person take his place. Others say that mobilizing the masses (particularly the

front) has special characteristics and that cadres can, therefore, work "until they die."

The truth is, in some places that have retired the key cadres and replaced them with younger cadres, the local movement has improved. But in other places, the replacement of just one key cadre has greatly hampered front work. From this, it can be seen that replacing cadres for renovation is essential but that changing people for people does not necessarily lead to renovation.

As for key cadres who have carried on activities for the front for many years, even if they have reached retirement age, if they are respected by the people and their health and intellectual acumen is still good, they can continue to bear responsibilities for a while longer (if the same-echelon front committee elects them). But if there are younger cadres (cadres who are at least 5 years younger than those currently holding the position) who enjoy the confidence of people, they should be appointed to replace the older cadres. Once these key cadres have given up their positions, depending on the specific conditions, the same-echelon front committee may ask these older cadres to serve as advisors to the front on general or specific matters in order to make rational use of their experience. Cadres in other sectors who are due to retire in a few years should not be transferred to the front or put in key positions with the aim of implementing a "waiting room" policy. Doing things that way will not increase people's confidence in cadres and will have a bad effect on the front's long-term renovation process. Cadres transferred from another sector must have at least 10 years left before retirement. (This requirement can be waived only in special circumstances.) Regardless of what their old position was or what level they were at, these cadres must be given time to absorb the fundamental realities and go deeply into the movement in order to train themselves and avoid inclining toward general guidance right from the beginning. If they skip this stage, they will lose their balance and create bureaucratic centralism, which will be very difficult to overcome.

Increasing the knowledge and work capabilities of front cadres requires different contents and formulas depending on the age of the cadres. For elderly key cadres, the most suitable method is to hold short-term research conferences in order to unify understanding and viewpoints on the organization and activities of the front during renovation. With younger cadres, there must be systematic training. But this must not be done entirely by the front. Basic subjects in Marxism-Leninism can be taught by party schools. The front can provide additional training in accord with the front's activities during each period.

Knowledge gained from the classroom is essential. But knowledge can also be gained from actual activities. And the most decisive thing is a spirit of inquiry and a desire to learn.

On the path of renovation, there are people who want to make plans, standardize front cadres, and change the policy regarding front cadres. Those things are necessary, but until viewpoints on the basic problems discussed above are clarified and unity is achieved, I don't think that it is necessary to design specific projects.

We Need an Organization Strong Enough To Carry on Tribal Work

*902E0113G Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN
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[Article by Dang Nghiem Van, deputy director of the Institute of Ethnic Studies, Vietnam Social Sciences Commission]

[Text] The mountain region holds a very important position in terms of politics, economics, and national defense. It has great potential, which is the precondition for building industrial and commercial centers, tourist centers, and prosperous special-product zones. Almost all of the tribal groups are concentrated here, the cradle of the revolution. But in the development process, there are still many complex political and social problems that are related to the fate and survival of the country.

Today, all ethnic groups must quickly shift from a natural, self-reliant economy to a planned commodity production economy and strive to solidify and build strong defense zones to defend the socialist fatherland. That is a great task, and it conflicts with the weaknesses in the ethnic minority areas.

Speaking objectively, at a time when our country must strive to overcome the crisis, it will not be easy for the mountain region to make clear changes. In the mountains, each area has its own special characteristics. Each tribe is different and is at a different level of economic and social development. Thus, along with the initial achievements that have been scored, it will be difficult to avoid making mistakes in carrying on the revolutionary movement in the mountains. Since the very beginning of the revolution, the party and state have given much attention to the tribal problem. The success in liberating the country was closely tied to the party's correct lines, policies and positions on tribal groups. The tribal peoples made great contributions to the country's victory. But recently, with a spirit of facing the truth squarely, the party has seen that in building socialism, the mountain areas are still weak in many respects. The tribal groups are still suffering many losses and experiencing many difficulties. The party has pointed out serious shortcomings in leadership and guidance with respect to the tribal work. There are many reasons for this, but here, I would like to discuss a problem that has existed for a long time, that is, the formation of a strong, unified, and stable organization and the formation of a rank of cadres strong enough to study, lead, and guide tribal work.

At both the central and local levels, for a long time now, the functions and tasks in organizing tribal work have not been clear, and the structure has changed frequently.

But to date, no satisfactory solutions have been found. During the democratic national revolution, the primary task of the organization in charge of tribal work was to encourage the tribesmen to rally round the party and fight and defeat the enemy. The apparatus consisted of people and cadres who were skilled in mobilizing the masses, who had much experience in waging a struggle, and who enjoyed the confidence of the people. Thus, important achievements were scored. But after the north and then the entire country entered the socialist construction stage, many difficulties were encountered in defining the tasks and functions of a unified organization whose task was to carry on tribal work.

If today's task is to grasp the situation and conduct inspections in order to give ideas to the party committee echelons and authorities, organizing tribal work requires cadres who understand the work of the primary sectors, particularly the economic sectors. Tribal problems and tribal relationships in building socialism must be studied. But this organization lacks the knowledge and necessary capabilities. This is not the fault of the cadres engaged in tribal work. For the most part, this is due to the lack of clarity about the role of the organizations engaged in tribal work in the present stage. Given the present structure, even if the elements engaged in tribal work submit correct proposals, the actual results will still be limited. There have been instances in which the party issued correct resolutions and directives on tribal work, but when they reached the sectors and lower echelons, they encountered many obstacles. People are usually concerned only about the general requirements and often ignore or put aside problems related to the mountain and tribal areas. After being pressed, some sectors and provinces have occasionally organized meetings to discuss activities related to the mountain and tribal areas. They have discussed various problems, but developmental work has been carried on slowly or in a formalistic manner. The work has even been postponed from one year to the next. In such situations, the organization engaged in tribal work can only take a passive position, complain, and wait.

Looking at the elements of the ministries and sectors that follow matters in the mountain areas, it can be seen that they get by as best they can. Some ministers have even done away with these units. The sectors involved in formulating, interpreting, and administering our country's laws have given much attention to the general legal code. They have given little attention to examining the fine points when applying these laws to the tribal areas. Just as in other sectors, in the education sector, the departments and technical institutes frequently turn over the work related to the mountain areas to those elements that follow things in the mountain areas. But the actions of these elements do not follow their words. They do not have the strength (without the cooperation of all the elements in the ministry and the sectors concerned) to handle the large volume of work concerning school buildings, instructors, educational programs, instructional methods, and so on suited to the

mountain areas. The commercial sectors seems to have forgotten the mountain areas. It has forgotten the motto "use what is near to compensate for what is far" in trading. Thus, traders buy low and sell high, they don't even transport salt into the mountains out of fear of suffering losses. In their annual reports, the ministries and sectors frequently make observations and even make sincere self-criticisms concerning their shortcomings with respect to the tribal areas. They regard that as natural and normal, and they are not blamed.

Moreover, for a long time, we have had an organization responsible for tribal activities, but it has not had sufficient powers or been efficient enough to handle such a major task as following, studying, and solving the theoretical and practical problems of tribal work. It has always been unstable and "left things to others."

Reality has shown that in order to satisfy the socialist construction requirements, in a multi-ethnic country such as ours, there must be a scientific theoretical and practical basis concerning ethnic matters. Thus, with respect to organization, we cannot remain tied to the old viewpoint, that is, putting tribal work in the sphere of mass agitation or the front, which is characterized by assembling forces. There must be an organization that will study things, serve as the staff, provide leadership and guidance, and control everything connected to tribal work.

As for the research function, a rank of good-quality cadres that has the ability to assemble scientists from many sectors must be formed. Investments must be made in state- and ministerial-level research programs concerning the problems that relate to the tribal problem.

As for serving as the staff of the party and administration, there must be a rank that can coordinate things with the functional agencies, serve as a consultant, and formulate the basic theoretical and practical contents of tribal work.

In each period, the organization responsible for tribal work must coordinate things closely with the sectors responsible for setting and hitting the targets pertaining to the mountain areas. Things cannot continue like today, where the organization is outside the two major movements that are decisive for the development of the mountain areas: the settlement of the nomads and the migration to build new economic areas. Things cannot continue like today, where activities concerning the Chinese, who are an ethnic minority group in the country, have their own separate mass agitation committee.

If a particular area or ethnic minority group is in urgent need of something such as a school or a road or a small tribe needs help, if scholarships should be awarded to tribal children in high mountainous areas where living conditions are very poor, if an area devastated by a natural disaster or epidemic needs help, or if there are problems between tribes that need to be solved, the

organization responsible for tribal work must shoulder the work. As for finances, it must have its own budget. As for powers, it must have the authority to assign tasks to various sectors, and it must examine things closely to see how well things have been carried out.

Finally, there is the function of inspecting things, keeping up the situation, and giving suggestions to the Party Central Committee and the state (at the macro level) and to the party committee echelons and local authorities (at the micro level) on matters related to tribal areas. This task is usually closely tied to the activities of the ministries, committees, and sectors and to the various localities. The organization responsible for tribal work must have adequate standards and capabilities and the qualifications to make judgments and criticisms and come to conclusions about the countless daily incidents related to tribal matters. To carry out this task well, it is not enough to rely on the individual prestige of a number of comrades who represent minority peoples or a number of political cadres who have much experience in working in mountain areas. There must be a rank of cadres who have research capabilities, who have had political, technical, and professional training (minority studies, history, scientific socialism, sociology, and so on), who are relatively young and in good health, and who have the ability to complete the tasks in today's difficult and complex situation.

In order to carry out the above tasks well, the organization responsible for tribal work must be a special ministry directly subordinate to the Council of Ministers. It must have its own material and technical base and its own budget. Most importantly, it must have a cadre force strong enough to carry on tribal work. This ministry can organize committees to solve the urgent problems and then disband them (for example, there was recently a Truong Son-Central Highlands Committee, a Cambodia Committee, and so on).

At present, there is a shortage of highly-qualified cadres to carry on tribal work in general and to work in tribal areas in particular. More cadres are "leaving" (retiring, transferring to another sector, leaving) than "entering." There is a shortage of replacement cadres. Furthermore, young cadres do not want to replace the older cadres engaged in tribal work. (There are many reasons for this, for example, unsuitable positions, roles, measures, and policies). This is a very serious situation today.

The general education and college sectors are confused about what policies and formulas to use to train tribesmen to turn them into core cadres in the tribal areas.

This problem can still be solved in time (even though things have been done very slowly so far) if we immediately take steps to establish an organization with the tasks, functions, and powers that I have discussed above. After that, we can establish research institutes and

schools at the country's major centers in order to conduct studies and train ranks of cadres for the mountain areas and tribesmen.

Average Party Members in the Rural Areas Today—An Alarming Problem

*902E0113H Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN
in Vietnamese No 8, Aug 89 pp 55-58*

[Article by Pham Van Khanh, research cadre at the Marxist-Leninist Institute]

[Text] In reality, the number of average cadres is increasing daily. Inspections in a number of localities have shown that approximately 50-70 percent of the party members in the rural areas are average party members. This is an alarming problem. The most striking manifestations of "average party members" in the rural areas are:

The cadres are not in the vanguard and do not set an example. They are indifferent and lack zeal in carrying out the work of the party and society.

They talk and act in an odd manner and tend to mind their own business.

Although they are not guilty of such serious shortcomings as to warrant being disciplined, they do not play an active role among the masses or enjoy the trust of the masses.

What has led to this situation in the rural areas?

For many years now, the recruitment of party members in the rural areas has not been good. In selecting and recruiting people for the party, attention is focused mainly on will power and quality (and many times, even these aspects are ignored). Not enough attention is given to their cultural, professional, and scientific and technical standards, their ability to manage economic and social matters, and their work abilities.

Our country is a backward agricultural country, and small-scale self-sufficient production is widespread. The great majority of the people are farmers and small peasants. Because of this, most of our party members have come from a peasant background. Peasant thinking and the way of life and work styles of small peasants are still deeply embedded in many cadres and party members. When party members who were born in a peasant society, who spent several decades in a combat environment, and who have worked and lived in different environments return to the rural areas, they revert to living and working in a rural socioeconomic environment. For these party members, this is a process of returning to their rural roots. They participate in the primary party organizations in the rural areas, and their entire life is closely tied to the village and to the practices and way of life that have existed for centuries in the rural areas. It is easy for this environment to influence these party members if they don't improve themselves, train, and form a working class viewpoint.

Today, many ideological changes are taking place in the party. Along with this, negative social phenomena are having a powerful effect on the ranks of party members. On the other hand, many primary-level party organizations in the rural areas have failed to play their role as the leadership core. This is because the quality of the party chapter activities is very low. The ranks of cadres and party members lack capabilities and standards. Many of the key cadres lack quality and are interested only in individual management. Educating, managing, and training party members is lax. Since the promulgation of Politburo Resolution 04 on purifying the party organizations, the quality of party members in general and party members in rural areas in particular has not improved very much. Many people lack the qualifications to be party members. They violate party regulations and statutes, but they are not prosecuted. In the new period, many of the party's measures, positions, and policies have not had much of an effect on the party members in the rural areas. In particular, little attention has been given to increasing the understanding, heightening the class consciousness, and elevating the position and role of the party members in the new period. The restrictions because of low cultural standards and backwardness concerning information are hurting the quality of the party members in the rural areas.

In conditions in which the party leads the regime, the reality is that almost every administrative position in the rural areas is held by a party member. Localism and factionalism are rather widespread in the party organizations. Along with this, family, clan, and village relationships and the customs and practices of farm life in the eastern rural areas have existed for centuries. The psychology of small farmers has limited the struggle to build the party and filled the party in the rural areas with members who are weak. The guild and patriarchal systems and family-ism are still deeply embedded in the behavior and work methods of the rural party organizations, and this has a bad effect on the quality of the party members.

In the rural areas today, more and more of the party members are retired and feeble servicemen, cadres, workers, and civil servants. In some places, such people account for 60-70 percent of the party members. Even though they have worked for many years in party, state, or military organizations, they lack experience in agricultural production and management. After living in retirement for a period, either because of a lack of information about the lines and policies of the party or because of a lack of training, a number of these people cannot satisfy the work requirements in the rural areas. A number of young party members who have returned after serving in the military, particularly women, must concentrate on taking care of family economic matters and raising their children. They revert to being peasants. Although they have party cards, in reality they are not above the masses and do not have any effect on the people.

Basically, in order to solve the "average party member" problem in the rural areas, careful studies must be done

on a broad scale in order to reach conclusions and implement measures in a synchronized manner. However, as discussed above, this problem stems from various historical, economic, cultural, and social reasons. Because of this, changing economic, cultural, and social life in the rural areas both now and over the long term is of great significance to the party organizations and ranks of party members in the rural areas. Politburo Resolution 10 on renovating the agricultural economic management mechanism is just one of many transitional steps with respect to the peasants and rural areas. Paths and measures must be found to gradually urbanize the rural areas. To do this, as Lenin said, the only way is to use industry (above all the agricultural products processing industry) and commerce to affect the rural areas. The economic structure and infrastructure in the rural areas must be changed. The first thing is to quickly step up the production of agricultural commodities, build water conservancy, communications, and posts and telegraph systems, and gradually electrify agricultural production and the rural areas. Manual labor must be replaced by machine labor in agricultural production, and the processing of agricultural commodities must be mechanized. Economic and social changes and changes in material, cultural, and spiritual life in the rural areas are the conditions, the basic agents, for changing the social class structure and, through that, gradually improving the quality of the party members in the rural areas.

The entire party must be unified in its thinking about how to evaluate and handle the "average party members." In order to strive to have more and more vanguard and model party members, specific standards must be set for party members in the new period. In the present stage, the leading standard for party members in the rural areas must be excellence in production. They must know how to use and apply the scientific and technical advances in production, animal husbandry, and agricultural commodity processing. They must know how to increase productivity and improve quality, and they must set an example in implementing the positions and policies of the party. They must know how to mobilize the masses to hit the economic and social targets of the localities and so on. Based on the specific standards mentioned above, it is essential that the party organizations in the rural areas purge themselves of those people who do not meet the standards for being a party member.

Strengthening party member education and management is a task that must be carried on regularly. In today's conditions, efforts must be concentrated on renovating the political theory education system and heightening the awareness and consciousness of party members in the rural areas. Studies must be done in order to make the party's new viewpoints, positions, and policies part of the educational and propaganda contents in the rural areas. As for party members who have returned from the military and state organizations, they must be trained regularly so that they can manifest their good qualities and exploit the experiences that they have

accumulated in previous work environments. They must be put in suitable work positions so that they can train and struggle. In particular, younger people with good qualities and abilities must be trained and turned into core cadres of the party. That is a way to gradually improve the quality of the party members and reduce the number of "average party members" in the rural areas.

Suitable work must be given to the party members. They must be involved in mass movements, and through this, the party members must be sorted. Those party members who are tied to the movements and who enjoy the trust of the people can remain in the party. Those who do not have any effect on the movements or people must be dealt with properly. The standard by which to measure party members is the quality of their work and their prestige among and effect on the people.

The cultural standards of the party members must be raised, and their scientific knowledge must be increased. In the coming period, when expanding the party, attention must be given to selecting people with cultural, scientific, and technical knowledge and occupational specialities. People who have low cultural standards or who do not have the minimum knowledge necessary to apply the cultural, scientific, and technical advances to production, work, and life should not be recruited into the party. Those who do not meet the cultural, technical, and vocational standards and who do not play any role or manifest any effect must be encouraged to leave the party. Opinion both within and outside the party regards recruiting and expelling people as normal occurrences during the process of solidifying and strengthening the party. Because in reality, many party members know that they are not having any effect and that they are not superior to people outside the party. But they refuse to leave the party, because they want to retain the title "party member." They are afraid of being evaluated and fear that they will be disciplined. Elderly people who are in poor health should retire from party life. There is no need to analyze their quality or classify them. Party members who have retired from other sectors and who do not participate directly in production should not be put in key positions in the party or administrative apparatus. Capable people who are still in good health should be used in mass organization work and social activities. Stipulations and guidelines on this should be implemented throughout the party in order to unify thinking, organization, and action. Educational measures must be implemented to ensure that party members correctly understand the pressing need to improve the quality of party members and expel those who are weak.

Solidifying and improving the leadership capabilities of the primary level party organizations in the rural areas is one of the important measures that must be carried on regularly. In the immediate period, efforts must be concentrated on solidifying the party chapters and improving the leadership capabilities of the party committee echelons and party chapter secretaries. Plans must be formulated to train ranks of core cadres in the

rural areas, particularly concerning cultural matters, party work, and theory and politics. Particular attention must be given to teaching them about the party's new viewpoints and ideas on man, the science of human and social control, the new control mechanism, and the party's new policies regarding the rural areas, agriculture, and the peasants. Conditions must be created to provide these ranks with information quickly and accurately.

Attention must be given to consolidating the organizations along with forming and training ranks of cadres. The experiences of many localities show that to improve the leadership capabilities of the primary level party organizations in the rural areas, the most important measure is to correctly select and employ party committee and party chapter secretaries. Along with this, suitable procedures and policies regarding these core cadres of the party must be implemented at the primary level. They should not have to concentrate on their work so much that their family life suffers.

A decline in party member quality cannot be tolerated forever. Degraded and degenerate people must be expelled from the party. Moreover, thought must be given to the existence of "average party members" in the party.

Group 565 Has Carried Out Economic Tasks Effectively

902E01131 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 8, Aug 89 pp 59-62

[Article by Nguyen Tai Dap]

[Text] Group 565, a military unit subordinate to the Truong Son Corps [binh doan], Ministry of Defense, has participated in building the Hoa Binh hydroelectric project and was recently commended as a Labor Hero by the state.

The group was formed in May 1965. It fought and provided combat support in central and southern Laos and helped build and defend the Ho Chi Minh Trail. After southern Vietnam was completely liberated, until the end of 1980, the group engaged in repairing the damage done to the forests, felling trees in western Quang Binh, and helping Laos build Highway 7b.

Since 1981, the group has been participating directly in building the Hoa Binh hydroelectric project, a very difficult job that requires satisfying high technical requirements and maintaining a very rapid pace. In the beginning, the standards of the cadres and soldiers were weak. The vehicles and machines were not in harmony, there was a lack of vehicles and equipment, and the vehicles and equipment available were old. The average number of troops was about 2,000 people a year. In the officer corps, about 30 were road and bridge, construction, water conservancy, and geology engineers.

During the eight years from 1981 to 1988, the group constructed subsidiary projects and 20 items on the main project, that is, the underground tunnel (a very difficult

and taxing job requiring advanced techniques). The project was completed ahead of schedule, and good quality and the safety of the people and property was maintained.

In particular, during the four operations to dam the river, phases one and two, control flooding, and put turbine No. 1 into operation, the group completed the tasks of each operation in an outstanding manner and made an important contribution to the victory scored by the entire work site.

Coordinating manual labor with mechanized labor, during those eight years, the group always exceeded the quotas by 10 to 25 percent. It excavated 169,000 cubic meters of earth, poured more than 235,000 cubic meters of concrete, transported more than 2 million meters of overburden, leveled more than 359,000 cubic meters of rock, built 9,900 meters of concrete roads and bridges, built 27,000 square meters of one-, two-, and three-story buildings, and dug 5,181 meters of underground tunnels.

Group 565 switched to carrying out economic tasks only recently, and it does not have much experience in building hydroelectric projects. But it has carried out the assigned tasks in an excellent manner and learned a number of good lessons.

1. Studying and working has produced rapid results:

In December 1980, after urgently solidifying the unit and building a temporary camp, the group began working. Even though it had little experience in building roads and bridges, given these new tasks, the group fulfilled the requirements of the labor project. The main labor forces were soldiers on active duty. Each year, the group discharged about one-third of its forces and brought in recruits to replace them. As a "B" subcontractor, the group was assigned work by the "B" general contractor (the general corporation building the Hoa Binh Hydroelectric Project). The methods used by the general corporation to assign tasks to the group were different from those used to assign tasks to the other corporations and special-sector enterprises. Usually, the group was assigned tasks based on the needs in each stage. Thus, the group usually lacked time to make thorough preparations. The thinking of the troops changed greatly. Some of the cadres working at the corporations and enterprises did not believe that the troops could do the work. Some cadres hesitated to assign work to the troops.

Facing this situation, with the help of higher echelons, the group decided that it would have to manifest the strengths of a military organization and overcome its weaknesses in economic activities. The group actively switched from carrying on economic tasks in coordination with preparing for combat to carrying out economic tasks on a full-time basis. The group took steps to ensure that the cadres and soldiers clearly undertook their responsibilities as representatives of the military in contributing labor in building one of the largest projects in the country. In order to fulfill this task, the group decided that the decisive thing was to increase people's

knowledge, improve their capabilities, and find suitable ways to learn quickly. The group studied and worked, studied in order to work, and worked and studied. It studied techniques and the organization of scientific labor. It learned how to operate the vehicles and construction equipment. The group formed a training unit to provide training concerning technical work. At the beginning, the group asked Soviet specialists and specialists from the general corporation to teach cadres in the group. These cadres, with the core being the engineering officers, became instructors and taught the other cadres and soldiers. Besides this, the group sent more than 160 people to study and train at schools operated by the state and the military. Of these 12 percent took economic management classes. The group also emphasized flexible training forms such as learning from others in daily work and popularizing and exchanging experiences on the spot. Emphasis was given to going on study trips both here and abroad.

The group stipulated that within three to four years, the men had to be turned into both professional soldiers and disciplined and capable technical laborers. Approximately 25-30 percent of the time was reserved for military and political training. The other 70-75 percent of the time was reserved for the technical program. Implementing this plan, the group ensured that every soldier received military and political training and that they were provided with specialized training in accord with the requirements of the tasks. Drivers, welders, and vehicle and equipment repairmen had to have high standards and so they were sent to regular classes held by higher echelons. As for those assigned to dig tunnels, pour concrete, and so on and statisticians, medical personnel, and drivers who needed additional training, the group undertook to train them itself.

Based on this formula, during those eight years, the group trained 308 drivers, of whom 138 drove BelAZ trucks, 342 repairmen and operators of construction equipment, and 927 people to dig tunnels. Hundreds of other types of personnel of the unit were trained in various occupations. At the outside corporations and enterprises, the technical workers mentioned above were usually given regular training in the Soviet Union or at schools here, with their training lasting one to three years. But Group 565 did not have the ability to do things that way and so it provided several months of theoretical training and then trained people on the job, with several experienced people assigned to look after one new person. After six to 12 months, the soldiers were able to pour concrete, level rock, use the small drills, and operate the other construction equipment. From the second year on, they became more and more experienced and had the skills equal to a grade two or three worker or even higher.

Thus, even though 500-700 soldiers were replaced each year, the group managed to maintain its key technical forces, which accounted for approximately 26-30 percent of the troops. It was not until after the newer recruits had been on the job awhile and were capable of replacing the

older soldiers that the older ones were discharged. This made it possible to avoid making mistakes during the transfer period.

2. Bravery and initiative in completing the difficult tasks:

The cadres and soldiers of Group 565 were well aware of the fact that building the Hoa Binh hydroelectric project was a challenge filled with hardships and difficulties that would require great sacrifice and perhaps even their life. Labor at this project in general was heavy labor, and it was very dangerous. The cadres and soldiers had to work in deep tunnels running for hundreds of meters. Each time a charge was set off, the noise was deafening and thick dust was everywhere. Some soldiers had to work hundreds of meters above, clinging to rock walls. With the pace of work always tense, the work was carried on 24 hours a day in four shifts. The work required the men to adhere to the technical regulations and work in a rhythmic and synchronized manner. A small mistake could have resulted in someone being killed or seriously injured. It was difficult for the workers to tell in advance if the overburden would collapse.

In order to carry on production safely and effectively, the group implemented a very tight construction control and command system. There were four shifts for the cadres so that they could guide and control the work on the spot. This also made them think about how to improve the work methods to make the work less taxing and to save manpower and money while maintaining safety and high quality and efficiency. During construction, units of the group were buried on seven separate occasions when the tunnels collapsed. More than 20 people were injured in these collapses, but the men did not abandon the work. The tunnel of one unit collapsed twice, but the men, unafraid of making sacrifices, worked hard to rescue their fellow workers from the tunnel. In labor, especially during the operations, the cadres and soldiers of the group made and applied many suggestions to increase productivity. For example, the amount of concrete poured exceeded the plan by 60 percent, tunnel clearing exceeded the plan by 32 percent, and the amount of overburden transported exceeded the plan by 30-50 percent. In particular, the two records set by the group for productivity in digging tunnels, that is, digging 40 and 51.8 meters in one month, have never been broken by any corporation or enterprise.

3. Maintaining the results of the work:

Group 565 began using an accounting system in the years immediately after it switched to economic work. Based on the advances made by the new economic management mechanism, the economic accounting of the group has become more and more orderly, and quality has improved. The group is switching to an organization similar to that of a construction corporation directly subordinate to the Truong Son Construction General Corporation, which is subordinate to the Ministry of National Defense. (The state recently

decided to change the name from the Truong Son Corps to the Truong Son Construction General Corporation.) The group is carrying on a reorganization and reassigning the laborers in a flexible manner to satisfy the production and business requirements in the new situation. It is reducing the size of the middle echelons and the size of the indirect staff and reducing the percentage of officers from 12 percent to nine percent. The group regularly educates its cadres and men so that they have a clear understanding of the problem: During the war, it was necessary to pay any price to satisfy the needs of the war. But now, in building the economy, each expenditure must be calculated carefully, and each one must bring a profit. Money and manpower cannot be wasted. In carrying on activities, the group has carried on accounting for each project and task and given planned quotas to each element and person. The group has given attention to maintaining the vehicles and equipment, and as a result, they have achieved a high technical and use factor. Not one vehicle or machine has had to be written off. The group has also recovered more than 400 tons of scrap iron, selected the good types, and put them to use. It has designed and successfully manufactured a drill and produced 4,200 of these drills at a cost of approximately 10 million dong. It has saved more than 10,000 kg of cement and petroleum. Besides this, in order to exploit the existing potential, the group has organized labor outside regular working hours in fields in the troop zone in order to become partly self-sufficient in food, and it has organized a number of other services to increase the incomes of the units and improve the quality of the meals of the troops. The group has satisfied the requirement of paying for the expenses itself, delivering money to the state budget, and harmonizing the interests of the military, of the units, and of the cadres and soldiers. In 1981 and 1982, the bulk of the money for national defense expenditures came out of the national budget. In 1983, the group began paying for some of the national defense expenses, such as recruiting troops, training new recruits, implementing the policy of discharging soldiers, and so on. Since 1984, revenues have

increased annually. In 1988, the group exceeded the norms given by higher echelons on the gross value of construction and installation, the amount to be turned over to higher echelons, and average labor productivity per worker and cadre and on reducing production costs.

From the production results mentioned above, the group has gradually improved living conditions for the troops. In 1988, besides the portion provided based on the general system of the military rear, each month each soldier has been paid about 30,000 dong, with cadres and officers receiving one and a half times the basic wage in addition to the allowances paid in accord with the general system. All of the companies, offices, and corresponding units have television sets and books and magazines. The men can watch movies and artistic performances three nights a month.

One of the main factors that has enabled Group 565 to complete the tasks in an outstanding manner during these past eight years is that it has constantly given attention to strengthening the units. Specifically, it has built mature and progressive organizations and men. The 14th and 39th regiments have been awarded four Military Exploit orders and one Military Medal. On 70 occasions, the companies and battalions have been recognized as Determined To Win units, and hundreds of cadres and soldiers have been recognized as outstanding emulators. Tran Van Cuong, the deputy commander of the group and the group's chief of staff, has been recognized as a Labor Hero. For eight consecutive years, the party organization has been recognized as a strong party organization, and 98 percent of the party members have adequate qualifications. More than 800 members of the Ho Chi Minh Assault Youth Union have been recruited into the party.

The achievements of Group 565 prove that our army can complete not only the combat tasks but also the economic tasks and the task of building the country. Group 565 is continuing to accumulate both good and bad experiences in order to move forward.

Debate on the Role of the Human Factor in Socialist Construction (Continued)¹

902E0113J Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 8, Aug 89 pp 63-70

[Text] On 2 June 1989, Ha Xuan Truong summarized the ideas expressed and proposed responding directly to the two questions posed at the beginning of the debate, giving more attention to the political and ideological aspects and to intelligence and talents....

[Pham Tat Dong] Our education must manifest its intellectual strength, because our age is the age of intelligence. We must increase the number of colleges. Today, there are only 200 students for every 100,000 people. In Thailand, there are 2,000. In our present commodity production situation, can private schools be opened? The Sixth Plenum of the CPV Central Committee mentioned this question, saying that although private schools should not be opened at the general level, many people have written petitions asking that private schools be allowed to open. The issue is religious schools and Chinese schools. In Ho Chi Minh City, the churches want to open kindergartens. Actually, they can do an excellent job of teaching kindergartners, and the nuns can take care of the children throughout the day. This issue is being debated in Ho Chi Minh City. The question is how to equip each youth with occupational skills. Computer classes must be offered at the general schools. The vocational schools must teach foreign languages, such as English, Japanese, and French, to prepare people to work with many countries.

[X. V. Kolesnikov] The same thing is true in my country. Many people want to establish private schools, but the state has not yet given them permission. The need to improve the effectiveness of the training is very great. People want to establish language schools and middle schools as in the "Sa Hoang" period. They want the schools to teach foreign languages and more social science courses. During the past two years, many articles have expressed opposition to this trend, saying that specialized schools are reserved mainly for the children of intellectuals and that it is difficult for the children of workers to get into these schools, which is not fair. With respect to computers, we are very backward. We are in the process of equipping the schools with computers, but this is not proceeding as quickly as has been stated in documents.

I want to ask those of you who already have private schools, how do they operate and how does the state control them? I ask these questions, because in my country, we do not yet have any private schools, fearing that their contents will be very different from the contents needed.

[Pham Tat Dong] A private college was established by Professor Hoang Xuan Sinh. This college has 73 students, who study mathematics and journalism. The Secretariat agreed to the establishment of this private school. The college has invited well-known mathematics

and journalism instructors to teach courses, and it receives \$500 a month from overseas Vietnamese living in Paris. Today, students must pay the equivalent of 10 kg of rice a month. Excellent students are given scholarships.

[X.V. Kolesnikov] That's not too expensive.

[Duc Minh] The system of private vocational schools can expand very rapidly. But private general schools have not been established. There are Level-3 schools that were established by citizens, but with the exception of materials and teachers' wages, everything is still controlled by the state.

Just as in the Soviet Union, educational reform in Vietnam is posing the question of specialized and technical education beginning with Level 3.

[X.V. Kolesnikov] I would also like to ask, Are students interested in the social sciences and in political science?

Tran Hong Quan: Since liberation, students have liked scientific and technical subjects and the natural sciences. Recently, a number of social sectors have received greater attention, but they are sectors that are tied to economics and foreign affairs, such as commerce, planned economics, and diplomacy. It is difficult to get students to study such subjects as political economics, scientific communism, and philosophy. Students are demanding that these subjects be renovated.

I would like to say a little more about the need to exploit other forces to provide education. Today, we have the capabilities to expand the private system but only in providing short-term vocational instruction. We cannot open colleges or provide long-term vocational instruction. The Thang Long College is the only pilot project. All of the instructors there come from other schools. The college does not have a rank of instructors, classrooms, or laboratories. In the final analysis, this is not mobilizing outside social forces. Instead, all this amounts to is exploiting the forces of the existing colleges. Only a little support is received from overseas Vietnamese. Many people have filed petitions to open such schools, but we are waiting to see what the results of this college will be.

[Duc Minh] To add to what Quan said, I would like to mention two points:

First, in order to exploit the human factor, attention must be given to building character. According to theory, to build character, people must be developed in all respects. Given Vietnam's present conditions, it is very difficult to develop people in all respects. We feel that building a multi-faceted character should be discussed only in the commodity production period, these five economic elements. We want to know about the Soviet Union's experiences in character education.

Second, there is no type of activity that is beneficial or necessary in a society that does not demand talent. To quickly improve the quality of life, every laborer in society must have the necessary capabilities. Today, we

are interested only in certain talents in a number of spheres. As a result, attention has not been given to other shoots of talent in other social spheres and so these shoots have withered. We must soon decide on a broad talent strategy. In this, there must be a strategy for discovering, fostering, and using each talent for the long-term benefit of the country.

[X.V. Kolesnikov] There has been a conflict in character education and technical education. It is not a question of how to teach social science. During the 1930s, we had many colleges, but the engineers trained during that period do not have adequate knowledge. We also lack people with degrees who are truly talented. Few engineers have prestige. And engineers do not earn any more than workers. This is a major problem for people with degrees. There must be a basic reform of the educational structure. Our reform has been moving very slowly, and reform is slowest in education.

We want to form socialist character, but the prestige of the social sciences is declining. In society, political reform is being carried on actively, but in the schools, people don't want to study political science. There have also been advances in instructional contents, but in general, the ranks of instructors are still conservative. Of course, simply doing a good job in teaching Marxism-Leninism will not form the new personality.

The problem of forming socialist personality in commodity production is a very interest matter. Some people fear that revering commodities will destroy the spirit. They demand that the traditional aspects, such as emphasizing the spiritual and ignoring the material, be maintained. I think that we can maintain the good traditions of the nation without affecting the development of the economy. This process has objective laws that we cannot oppose through will power.

[N.D. Golovnin] Returning to the commodity problem, I disagree totally with the idea that in commodity production conditions, most of the people will become involved in trade rather than production. Naturally, in economic accounting conditions, people must consider how to make a profit. Unfortunately, a number of writers and journalists have exaggerated our mistakes in implementing the economic policies. They have given their own viewpoint and portrayed this as the viewpoint of all the people. But they are running after profits in commodity production, publishing "attractive" books in large numbers, and receiving generous compensation.

[X.V. Kolesnikov] It should not be thought that most of our writers are concerned about the material. Of course, in many cases, their works simply reflect the views of certain groups of people, not all the people. Or they reflect just their views. Their works express feelings of patriotism and a concern for the country, which is in crisis. But the solutions that they propose are not always correct. For example, in assigning responsibility for our present situation, in which we are on the edge of the abyss, they think that this has been caused by a few

youths bringing rock music into the country. The good thing is that the changes have affected the writers, and they want to contribute to improving the situation.

[Thanh Son] A number of people think that education is a burden on the economy. They do not regard education as a precondition of the economy. From where can the money be obtained to expand education and training?

[Ha Xuan Truong] To ensure that man is truly the motive force of society, from where must we begin—economics, politics, culture?

[Thanh Son] The Vietnamese people are not inferior to anyone. Americans have observed that Vietnamese came to the United States later than other peoples but that they are the equal of anyone. At one American college, two Vietnamese are always at the top of their class. In Vietnam, the south is more dynamic than the north. This stems from the environment, not heredity.

Many people agree with us that there must be a human rights law. Of course, promulgating a law won't solve all the problems, but that will form the basis for people to advance to real freedom. Only if people are free will they be dynamic and creative. I support the view that freedom means the right to do anything not specifically prohibited by law or anything that does not harm others or society. I agree with the idea of reducing [the number of] ministries, but a human rights ministry should be established.

[Bui Cong Trang] The restrictive nature of the bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies mechanism weakened the dynamism of social development. I am referring to the dynamism, creativity, and social activeness of individuals.

In that mechanism, the interests of society were exaggerated, and the interests of the individual were ignored. A specific manifestation of this in the distribution sphere was average-ism.

Average-ism in distribution existed for many years in all the production sectors, from agriculture to industry and from the cooperatives to the industrial enterprises. This distribution method obstructed expansion of production and the development of society. It did not stimulate the dynamism, creativity, labor zeal, or social activeness of the individuals.

The "perfection" of average-ism is at the same time a process of developing great internal conflicts. That is why this went into decline and became an unprincipled type of distribution. The results of that are now creating large obstacles and hindering the renovation of the country.

A major problem is that average-ism, regardless of what form it takes, must be opposed. It must be replaced by the principle of distribution according to labor in order to build a just society.

[E.V. Saskov] Thanh Son and Bui Cong Trang have mentioned political freedom and distribution according to labor. These are problem that are being given attention in my country. I think that in a socialist country, the problem of political freedom is easier to solve than the problem of economic freedom. After the Human Rights Conference in Vienna, we reviewed our human rights policy and expanded the work of allowing those who wanted to go abroad to do so. I think that the law must be revised prior to the Human Rights Congress in Moscow.

An even more important problem is the problem of economic freedom so that people can improve their lives by their own labor. The conditions to create economic freedom are more difficult than the conditions to create political freedom. Our economic reform is very complex. Of course, providing economic freedom is closely related to [providing] political freedom.

[N.D. Golovnin] Some people have asked about the income gap in the Soviet Union. This is a very complex problem. I will discuss only a few aspects. Along with the large income gap are other negative phenomena: The purchasing power of the currency is different from buyer to buyer and from locality to locality. This has affected the food distribution formulas and given rise to the principle of distribution according to priority in the party, the ministries, and the sectors. People are not paid wages based on the principle of distribution according to labor. Rather, wages are paid in order to solve the labor shortage problem. The result is that unskilled workers and simple laborers have higher incomes than skilled workers. These negative phenomena have harmed the principle of paying wages according to labor. The payment of wages has lost meaning. One of the targets of economic reform is to maintain this principle and maintain equal purchasing power throughout the country.

Another problem is that cost relationships are not in balance. We have had to use a number of ration coupons. This has affected the restructuring process and economic reform. If economic reform is not carried on in a synchronized manner, each reform will bear a cost and cause inflation to rise. The experiences of the socialist countries during the past several decades and of China today show that economic reform policies must go hand-in-hand with an anti-inflation program. The June 1987 plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union examined the economic reform and financial problems.

In reality, since 1985, two phenomena have influenced our budget revenues: The prohibition on alcohol has resulted in the loss of tens of billions of rubles, and lead-in prices on world markets have declined. At the same time, expenditures have increased. This has led to inflation. At its meeting in December 1988, the Politburo discussed this problem in order to formulate a policy to achieve financial balance. The initial measure was to limit budget expenditures. If this is not done, the 100 billion ruble deficit will increase. We are gradually

reducing military expenditures, limiting expenditures for capital construction, and using most of the foreign currency to import consumer goods for the people and technical equipment. Yesterday, when discussing the report presented by M.X. Gorbachev at the Congress of People's Delegates, the delegates said that this is not enough and that more measures are needed. They stressed that adopting these measures may or may not support reform. We have many problems that must be solved. We cannot retreat any further. We understand that only by maintaining balance between money and goods and by maintaining market stability will we be able to mobilize the active nature of the people.

[Le Huu Tang] In one way or another, you have all talked about the matter of interests, which starts with ownership. If the people don't control the means of production, they won't have any rights. But can interests start from that? Trying to solve the problem of interests by starting from ownership rights is not right. Ownership rights are actually an economic matter. Looked at this way, attention will be focused on economic interests instead of individual interests. To stimulate people, emphasis must be placed on interests, mainly individual interests. In Vietnam, for many years now, we have not dared recognize individual interests. A concern about individual interests has been viewed as becoming mired in the mud of selfishness and pettiness. But regardless of whether or not they are recognized, individual interests cannot be ignored. The Sixth Plenum of the CPV Central Committee regarded individual interests as a direct motive force that can create a basis for satisfying other interests. There are many types of individual interests, including economic and political interests, but economic interests play the most important role. Encouraging individual interests is a correct policy. But recently, we have gone to the other extreme, that is, paying attention only to economic interests and disregarding other interests.

In commodity production, everything that is done involves the problem of accounting. That has hurt many spheres. For example, arts and letters have been commercialized. The same is true in science. What is worse is that works dealing with the social sciences and with Marxism-Leninism are not printed, or they are printed on bad paper in small numbers. On the other hand, books that are harmful to spiritual life are printed in large numbers. The economic profits that are made cannot compensate for the spiritual damage that is done. There must be coordination between the various interests.

[X.V. Livitsky] I see a contradiction in the views of Le Huu Tang. Revolutionaries in my country have published books in small numbers using bad paper, but their books have still had a great influence on the people. The main thing is that these books must benefit the people. In Moscow, there are histories of the party that are sold on the black market. This shows the effectiveness and influence of these books.

[Khong Doan Hoi] A lot has been said about exploiting the human factor, but in reality, little has been done.

Capitalism has said very little but done a lot. Perhaps the science of action began in the West. That is a science that is concerned with man. We talk a lot about equality, but even in the Soviet Union, after building socialism for 70 years, this problem has still not been solved. We need a balanced social policy. There must be a balanced attitude in relationships regarding people and social equality. Should just a few people be allowed to enjoy social welfare or should jobs be provided for everyone? Should a few people be allowed to live in poverty while those who can work are allowed to stimulate the development of society?

We talk a lot about opposing exploitation, but we exploit each other all the time. Average-ism is a form of exploitation. A distinction must also be made between ideals and the ability to achieve those ideals. On what rung of the ladder of democracy is Vietnamese society? We are on the lowest rung.

Who are "we?" "We" refers to all those who do not oppose socialism. All of these people must be the masters. The workers in a capitalist society never think of themselves as the owners of the enterprise, but they are tied tightly to the enterprise because they are tied to interests. In talking about interests, individual interests should not be separated from social interests. Individual and social interests should be joined together when talking about the interests of the laborers.

[N.D. Golovnin] In my view, social interests cannot exist without man. Those are the interests of people joined together to form a society. Collective interests are the interests of people joined together to form a collective. One person may be a member of many collectives. The basic question is what the structure of collective interests and individual interests will be like. Socialism is threatened when the interests of a certain group of people are viewed as the interests of all of society. Our society is a socialist society or a society with socialist tendencies. Interests, therefore, must be developed based on socialism.

[Khong Doan Hoi] If "individual" and "social" interests are separated, they will destroy the harmony.

[X.V. Livitsky] The correlation between interests is a basic problem. M.X. Gorbachev said that the essence of reform is giving attention to the problem of interests and solving the problems through interests. This is the key to every problem. I agree with Ha Xuan Truong and Khong Doan Hoi about this problem. In the past, in my country individual and collective interests were defined in a rigid manner. Individual interests had to be sacrificed for collective interests. People gained prestige when they sacrificed their individual interests for the collective. There was a great division between the interests of the workers and the interests of the enterprises.

In reality, social interests are not the interests of any one group. We support tendencies in the interests of the Marxist individual. Engels taught us that a revolution

must start from the interests of man and that each person's freedom to grow is the condition for developing the freedom of society.

(The debate would have continued with great vigor and enthusiasm, but it was time to conclude the meeting.)

[Ha Xuan Truong] During the past 2 days, we have talked about the matter of human motivation. This is a round-table debate. We cannot and do not need to come to any final conclusions on these problems. We can conclude the debate here if there are no other problems to be discussed. I would like to ask X.V. Kolesnikov to express his views on this debate.

[X.V. Kolesnikov] I am happy that the problems that we discussed are in accord with the real situation today. In developing the commodity economy, man has been fully revealed, and we hope that man will be worthy of man. It is not enough to put human themes into the schools. We must also teach science, particularly Marxist-Leninist science, in the schools using new forms so that man grows in all respects and in a harmonious manner. Each country must carry on things based on its own socio-economic base. In my country, for a long time, people have viewed the things built as very beautiful. We are proud of being the first socialist country in the world. Now, we have decided that there is no single form of socialism but that there are many paths to socialism. Dogmatism is very dangerous. We have denied our economic interests and assets. For a long time, we have denied ourselves, failing to exploit our creative talents. Today, socialism has a new chance. During the renovation process, we will certainly reach new heights.

We are resolutely following the path of real and humanistic socialism even though we do not know its forms. On this path, we may make mistakes and may have to retreat a step. The new social model will be built based on reality in coordination with theory with the aim of serving man. The masses have the right to be independent and manifest their talents. The role of science, particularly the social sciences, is very important. In reality, we have just begun to study the science of mankind. The Soviet Union recently established an Institute of Mankind. Cooperation between our two parties and our scientists will definitely achieve results in this sphere.

This is the first debate between Vietnamese and Soviet scientists. This friendly and open debate will push us forward. We believe that this will be manifested in our magazines many times. Thank you. See you in Moscow.

[Ha Xuan Truong] We did not waste our time in organizing this debate between our two journals [TAP CHI CONG SONG and COMMUNIST]. This was the first round-table debate to discuss manifesting the role of the human factor in socialist construction. Some people wonder why we had to meet face-to-face instead of writing articles and sending them to each other. Sending articles cannot replace face-to-face discussions. Such

debates are valuable even if there are difficulties concerning communications and material expenses.

"Man" is always an issue, the "problem of every problem." The human factor in socialist construction is a broad problem, because socialism is for man. In discussing mankind, you cannot ignore mankind's natural and social environment. Of course, no one thinks that several more debates will solve all the problems. Many of the problems mentioned are growing worse. During these past two days, we have discussed the major questions, from common questions such as the nature of socialism to economic structures, political bodies, social, cultural, and educational policies, character, personality, national traditional, religion, and so on. But all of these things revolve around interests, above all economic interests and the ownership rights of laborers.

Man is an animal, but he is also a social animal and a combination of all social relationships. We cannot solve the problems of man in the abstract but must start from Soviet and Vietnamese practices based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism. Reorganization has been underway in your country for about three years, and renovation has been underway here for about two years. We have discussed the commodity labor strength, economic effects and the interests of laborers, distribution, social fairness, freedom, democracy, the party, social organizations, education, character development, public health, and concern for the health of people. Those at this debate were in agreement on ensuring the interests of the laborers by showing specific and effective concern

and taking action and not by spouting empty words. If we want man to be a motive force, where do we begin? We are not in agreement on certain problems, but we do agree that we must start with the specific and practical interests of the laborers. We must enable the laborers to become masters and ensure them real freedom and democracy, which are the social conditions necessary to being masters.

The debate between our two groups of scientists was carried on in a spirit of fraternity, frankness, and openness. People participated very actively at this debate, which shows that each delegation had prepared carefully. Also, we are now more familiar with each other's situation.

Our two countries are facing similar problems. That is because we share the same ideological system and have the same goal, socialism. The Soviet Union's experiences in building socialism are extremely important for Vietnam. The difference between our two countries is that the Soviet Union is far ahead of Vietnam economically and culturally, and the Soviet Union has built socialism within the context of its own historical and social conditions.

I hope that our two journals will reflect the key problems and the liveliness of this debate. Thank you.

Footnote

1. See TAP CHI CONG SAN, No 7, July 1989 p 58-69 [or JPRS-ATC-90-001 p 22].

Character

902E0113K Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN
in Vietnamese No 8, Aug 89 pp 71-73

[Article by Nguyen Van Luu]

[Text] In literary circles, recently, people have been talking about character—loyalty, feelings and ability, sincerity, and reality. Does anyone think that this is something to be happy about? It would be strange indeed if writers had to remind themselves about character. That would be the same as Buddhist monks having to remind themselves to get a haircut. In the past, the character of scholars was clear and required no further discussion. Without character, you could not be a scholar. In the past, people praised the pine tree and gave the name "noble bamboo" to a species of bamboo that grows straight. Everyone agreed that writers and poets must above all have character and that they should express character in their writing, not only to show their own feelings but also to illuminate and brighten the feelings of their readers. Today, the concept about human character in general and the character of writers in particular is richer, but on the whole, this is an extension of the basic concept of character held by people in the past. Writers are warriors on the cultural front. They are trusted friends and teachers. Clearly, they must have the qualifications, character, and spirit of vanguard warriors and respected teachers. During the past 40 years, in literary life, there have been very few times when writers have had to discuss the character of writers. But now, this has become a popular and sometimes very serious topic of discussion. What is so difficult to understand?

That is the result. In literary life of the past several years, particularly the past year, in writings and criticisms and at conferences and round-table discussions, there have been many complaints about character. In discussing renovation, although no one has been named outright, people have confirmed that there are sluggish conservatives, opportunists, evil plots, and suspicious actions. Many times, the discussions have gone beyond the bounds of literature. These are no longer educational debates but sparring contests. Whoever does not agree with you is immediately labeled an opportunist or mean person. When discussing things with a person who could be their teacher, young writers don't discuss what is right or wrong but talk in a derisive manner. At a debate attended by hundreds of people, one well-known professor insulted a colleague about an academic mistake made in the past. One person who considered himself as holding heterodox views (meaning that he did not know or care about that philosophy) went to a meeting and said: "Is renovation being carried on sincerely." Critics who want to praise a writer must mobilize all their writing skills to discuss the talents of the writer. But once he gains fame, he looks down on others, viewing them as inferior and without sufficient standards to read the works of the immortal writers. Some writers try to learn about the private lives of others in order to write a novel. When interviewed, some writers talk about character in a very lofty and clear manner, but in their works, they write

stories to retaliate against those who have criticized them. They waste most of their time insulting people.

The petty-mindedness mentioned above is not the only thing that is sad. There are many other forms. People act very unaffected in being forgetful or show great profundity in their misunderstanding. In the past, some people praised socialist realism, but now, in a smooth-tongued manner, they say that this is bogus and does not prove anything. People once quoted classical works as reflecting reality, but now they say that the classicists never said those things. Some well-known people have accused others of not knowing anything about Marxism, saying that this is an unforgivable sin. But they themselves do not understand simple principles and do not understand the relationship between politics and arts and letters. One year, writers publish works affirming the achievements of the new literary age, from personality and ranks to language. But by the next year, they have "forgotten" things in order to deny what they said. Scientists have the right to make mistakes. They can develop theories and concepts that are not in accord with the truth and can make mistakes while seeking the truth. But scientists cannot distort clear-cut principles in order to defend their viewpoints. That is a part of character.

There are many other features concerning the character of writers with which social opinion should be concerned. Some people remain silent about their character and writing style but quietly divide their works into two types. Every year, they write several volumes, all of which are quite similar. Few are positive or philosophical. Many of these negative romances are very popular with young people. Are those who write the books on sale at the open-air book markets partly responsible, and is this a matter of character?

Recently, some people have said that people must stand on the side of the state power system in order to suppress the depravity of today's Vietnamese writers. That is wrong. Our social nature is unity between the laborers and their power system. If writers have political and civic concepts, they must voluntarily stand within the unified block. That will not eliminate or limit the rights or obligations of writers, who must criticize what is wrong and evil in the various spheres of social life, in the state power system, among the people, and in the arts and letters circles. Writers in Vietnam cannot stand in opposition to the power system of their society, people, or country like a force in a pluralistic political body. That could destroy social unity—the unity between the party and the people and between the state and the people—which is something that the party and revolution have shed much blood and spent much energy to achieve.

The character of writers is also the character of man. It is sacred and valuable. With respect to writers, there are higher requirements and models. Like instructors, setting an example with respect to character is a principle. The long-standing difficulty of writers is that they must somehow keep the concept of individuality from turning into individualism. Attention must be given to fostering creativity and enriching behavior. But writers cannot

allow their own anger and discontents to reach readers. People cannot cry at weddings and laugh at funerals for their own personal reasons.

Character undergoes its own process of formation, development, and perfection. Allowing it to manifest itself is more reliable than lectures.

Improving the Training of Social Sciences Cadres

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 8, Aug 89 pp 74-76

[Article by Mach Quang Thang; not published]

A Few Thoughts on Today's Socialist Ownership Relationships Concerning the Means of Production

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 8, Aug 89 pp 76-78, 82

[Article by Xuan Nguyen; not translated]

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Socialism and Human Rights

00000000 Hanoi *TAP CHI CONG SAN* in Vietnamese
No 8, Aug 89 pp 79-82

[Article by Do Nguyen Phuong; not translated]

East German Socialism

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 8, Aug 89 p 83-88

[Article not translated]